Bulletins of the Department of Indian History and Archæology, No. 1

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SOME ASPECTS OF THE VĀYU PURĀṆA

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UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

1933

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[Reprinted from the *Journal of the Madras University*]

SOME ASPECTS OF THE VĀYU PURĀṆA

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SECTION I

The Name

The scene of this Purāṇa, considered to be one of the earliest of the extant Purāṇas, is laid in the Naimiṣāraṇya where sages and learned Brahmans assembled in connection with the sacrifice (*yajña*) of King Adhisīmakṛṣṇa. It appears that Vāyu, the wind god, originally communicated it to the assembled sages. This was then learnt by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa who in his turn taught it to Lomaharṣana, the Sūta. Ugraśravas, his son, repeats the same to the holy men at the Naimiṣāraṇya. There is internal evidence of the fact that Vāyu was the original author, for now and then, occurs the phrase *Vāyuruvāca*, and questions are put to him by the sages.[1] No doubt Vāyu is as much a mythical figure as Vyāsa. Neither seems to be genuine authors though orthodox tradition bears testimony to this. Nor even Lomaharṣaṇa or his son Ugraśravas seems to be the real author. All of them seem to have been the transmitters of tradition from time to time. At the least the Purāṇa itself accepts change of thirty-one hands from Brahma to the Sūta.[2] Examining critically the materials of the extant Purāṇa, it is reasonable to assume that there were many redactors who made either additions or omissions according to the dictates of their fancy. Notwithstanding these transformations, much of the material of which the Purāṇa is composed, is old, genuine, and acceptable for historical purposes.[3]

SECTION II

Its Place in the Mahā-purāṇas

We know it as a matter of fact that every Purāṇa furnishes us with a list of the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas so called. But all such lists are not identical but slightly vary from one another. For example,

[1] See, for example, chapters 100 and 101.
[2] Ch. 102, sl. 58-66.
[3] See Pargiter, *Dynasties of Kali Age* and *An. Ind. Historical Tradition*, pp. 77–81.

the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is omitted in the list of some Purāṇas, though others include it in their lists. The *Padma Purāṇa*, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* do not include the *Vāyu Purāṇa* in their catalogue of the Mahā-purāṇas. The position with regard to other Purāṇas may be thus explained. The *Agni Purāṇa* and the *Matsya Purāṇa* omit the *Śiva Purāṇa* and substitute the *Vāyu Purāṇa* in its place. The *Kūrma Purāṇa* does not mention the *Agni Purāṇa* and inserts the *Vāyu Purāṇa* instead. The *Vārāha Purāṇa* again omits the *Garuḍa* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* and substitutes the *Vāyu* and the *Nārasimha* in their places. Excepting these four Purāṇas, the lists in the other Purāṇas do not fail to include the *Vāyu Purāṇa* and therefore the majority of the Purāṇas agree that the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is a *Maha-purāṇa*, and not an *upapurāṇa* as some would have it.

Sometimes the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is identified with the *Śiva Purāṇa* and sometimes with the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*.[1] It may be, however noted here that the Tamil tradition as narrated in the *Piṅgalandai* omits the *Vāyu* from the list and includes the *Śiva Purāṇa* to form the total number of eighteen.[2] As many as six purāṇas have also the name of the *Śiva Purāṇa* in their lists. In his commentary on the *Mitākṣara*, Bālambhaṭṭa proceeds to identify the *Śiva Purāṇa* with the *Vāyu Puraṇa*. It appears that, on a closer examination of the contents of both the Purāṇas, the theory that both the *Vāyu* and the *Śiva Purāṇas* are identical, may not hold good. The apparent confusion may be due to the *Vāyavīya saṁhitā* tacked on to the end of the extant *Śiva Purāṇa*. The *Vāyavīya saṁhitā* is in its turn divided into two parts, the *pūrva bhāga* of 35 chapters and the *uttara bhāga* of 41 chapters. These occupy the seventh book of the *Śiva Purāṇa* and this seems to have been taken for the *Vāyu Purāṇa* and consequently the *Vāyu Purāṇa* has been removed from the lists of some Purāṇas, the *Śiva* or some other Purāṇa being inserted in its place. An examination again of the *Vāyavīya saṁhitā* section of the *Śiva Purāṇa* with the extant *Vāyu Purāṇa* does not show any correspondence either in texts or contents. If the present *Vāyu Purāṇa* cannot be identified either with the *Śiva Purāṇa* as a whole or with the *Vāyavīya saṁhitā* of the *Śiva Purāṇa*, then, it is reasonable to assume that the *Vayu Purāṇa* is an independent Purāṇa and has no connection whatsoever with the *Śiva Purāṇa* or its last section.

The suggestion has been made that this Purāṇa and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, were originally one *Purāṇa* and later on became separated into two independent Purāṇas.[3] No doubt, passages agree *verbatim*

[1] The *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Bib. Ind. II. Preface by Rajendralal Mitra, 1838.
[2] See my paper on the *Purāṇas : A Study*.
[3] Pargiter, *An. Ind. Hist. Trad.*, pp. 77–8.

in both the Purāṇas ; but it is more reasonable to conjecture that one is indebted to the other by borrowing passages from many a section. Now that the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* occurs in the lists of all the eighteen Purāṇas and the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is omitted in some, it may be inferred that the *Vāyu Purāṇa* was composed later than the *Brahmāṇḍa* and that the *Vāyu Purāṇa* was indebted to it, though both come under the category of the oldest Purāṇas now available.

Then the question is whether the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is a *Mahā-purāṇa* or not. That it is a *Maha-purāṇa* is testified to us by more than one evidence. First, the matter and manner of style demonstrate that it is the oldest of the Purāṇas now existing. But more of this later on. Secondly, the majority of the *Maha-purāṇas* include it in their lists.

Thirdly, it answers to the description of a *Mahā-purāṇa* as given by the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

SECTION III

Classification of its Contents

The version of the *Matsya Purāṇa* which is considered to be old, contains a significant statement with the implication that the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is a composition of the *Śveta Kalpa* (the present Kalpa is so called by the Hindu astronomers) and that it is 24,000 stanzas in extent.[1]

An examination of the extant Purāṇa, both the MSS. and the published editions, shows its range from 10,714 to 12,000 ślokas.[2] Either the statement of the *Matsya Purāṇa* is wrong or the present Purāṇa is defective. We venture to accept the latter view in the face of an internal evidence wherein the Purāṇa claims 23,000 stanzas.[3] It appears that the original *Vāyu Purāṇa* which was in extent 23,000 ślokas got a further addition of a thousand ślokas by the time of the *Matsya Purāṇa* and gradually portions of it became lost until at last it was reduced to half its size, the extent of the extant Purāṇa. When one reads through the whole, one feels a break in its continuity, omission

[1] श्वेतकल्पप्रसङ्गेन धर्मान्वायुरिहाब्रवीत् ।
यत्रैतद्वायवीयं यस्याद्रुद्रमाहात्म्यसंयुतं
चतुर्विंशत्सहस्राणि पुराणं तदिहोच्यते ॥

[2] See the Preface of Rajendralal Mitra to his edition of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Bibliotheca Indica.

[3] See ch. 103, st. 7.

त्रयोविंशति साहस्रमनिलं तद्गतं शुभम् ।

of several passages, repetition of many stanzas and lastly misplacement of several names and verses. These features show that the Purāṇa has been meddled with to a considerable extent and even in the extant volume, if one begins to set aside the later interpolations like the glorification of Gayā, the sacred place of pilgrimage, what remains will be roughly one-fourth of the original purāṇa, which is, however, ancient and genuine.

According to the catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts in the Library of the India Office (Pt. v., ed. by Julius Eggeling 1896), there are a good number of *māhātmyas* which profess to be part of the *Vāyu Purāṇa.* These are:

1. *Narmadā-māhātmya* which is in praise of the sacred river Narmadā.

2. *Māgha-māhātmya*, a section of 30 chapters (separately published in Poona, 1878) treating of the importance in detail of the effect of *māgha-snānam* or the ceremony of ablutions in the month of *Māgha*, illustrated by a series of legends.

3. *Ānandakānana-māhātmya* (*rahasya*)—also called *Kāsi-māhātmya* professing to be a section of the *Lakshmī-saṁhitā* of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* wherein the Vaiṣṇava creed finds strong expression.

4. *Gosthāna-māhātmya* in five chapters treating of legends on the origin of a group of sacred pools near Śrinagara, comprised under the name of Gosthāni.

5. *Pāpaghnī-māhātmya* containing a legendary account of the river Pāpaghnī ; and

6. *Rājagṛha-māhātmya* treating of the legendary origin of Rājagṛha, the ancient capital of Magadha.

7. The *māhātmya* of Karvan or Kāyāvarohaṇa, is of special interest to us in that, that out of its four chapters, the first chapter ends thus : '*Iti Śri Vāyupurāṇe Śivaprasūti-sargaḥ.*' The other three chapters are attributed to *Śiva Purāṇa* with which we are not at present concerned.

The mention of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* in the colophon of the first chapter of the *Māhātmya* is an instance of the fathering of modern compilations on an ancient work. Either in the extant editions or the manuscript copies which go under the name of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, we do not have a special chapter or section entitled *Śivaprasūti sargaḥ*. It is not impossible, however, that such a chapter was in the original Purāṇa, as the latter speaks of the different incarnations of Śiva, of which Lakulīśa is one.[1] There is no denying the fact that these *māhātmyas* or glorifications of certain centres of pilgrimage are much later compositions, and cannot go in as the old material of the

[1] *Ar. Sur. of India, An. R. 1906–7*, p. 180.

Purāṇa. In order to give credence to these smaller works, their authors have ingeniously tacked them on to a Mahā-purāṇa, so that they might claim more attention from the public. Fortunately for us the editors of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* both in Bengal and Bombay have not included these *māhātmyas* which are ascribed to the Purāṇa. It would have been again better if the editors had stopped with chapter 41 of the second kāṇḍa. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* proper certainly ends with it. The chapter commencing with *Vyāsasamśayāpanodanam*[1] and the following eight chapters are clear interpolations.

The opening chapter of the Purāṇa is typical of its kind. It was the reign of king Adhisīmakṛṣṇa, a king of the Paurava dynasty, who lived long before the Kali Age. At this time the sages were engaged in their twelve-year sacrifice on the bank of the river Dṛṣadvatī in the Naimiṣa forest, the legendary origin of which is also described. In the course of this sacrifice, there appears on the scene the Sūta Paurāṇika and on the request of the sages assembled the Sūta narrates to them the *Vāyu Purāṇa* as it was heard by him. The prologue of this kind has its own value. First it carries us back to the age of the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Atharvaveda*, where many of the predecessors of the reigning king Adhisīmakṛṣṇa are mentioned.[2] Secondly, it furnishes us with a succinct account of the contents of the whole work. The opening chapters of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* seem to give us three indexes of which the first two are neither precise nor in order. They have no correspondence with the contents of the work. We are however on surer ground when we come to the third index which is fairly full and which almost coincides with the contents of the Purāṇa. Though the whole of it presents an unsystematic and ill-arranged method still it enables us to find out what contents of the Purāṇa have been omitted, lost or added. As a table of contents, the introductory portions are indeed valuable to a student of history. In this respect it compares favourably with the prefatory chapters of the two epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*.

Coming then to an examination of the contents of the Purāṇa we find at the outset that the whole of the Purāṇa is divided into two kāṇḍas[3], besides the peculiar classification of four *pādas* or sections, the *Prakriya pāda*, the *Anuṣaṅga pāda*, the *Upodghāta pāda* and the *Upasaṁhāra pāda*.

It is peculiar in the sense that other Purāṇas excepting the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* do not go under this classification. Leaving out the two opening chapters, the *Prakrīya Pāda* occupies only four

[1] Chapter 103 of the Ānandaśrama edition.
[2] C. H. I., Vol. 1., p. 302.
[3] The second kāṇḍa begins with the 62nd chapter.

chapters, with the general title of *sṛṣṭiprakaraṇam* or the creation of the world.

The second section entitled the *Anuṣaṅga Pāda* is the longest of the four sections and comprises 58 chapters of the book,—beginning with the 7th chapter and ending with the 64th chapter. The following are the titles of the important chapters—creation of gods and men, cycles of Manus, practice of yoga, a description of thirty-three *kalpas* or fixed epochs of the duration of the world, the last of which is the *Śvēta* or white *kalpa* in which we are now said to live. Incarnation of Mahādeva, and the curse of Dakṣa, descendants of Ṛṣis, of Agni and other devas, of Svāyambhuva Manu, of Prajāpati and of Pṛthu are also some of the chief topics. Others are a description of the *Jambūdvīpa*, of the four *yugas*, of the sacred *tīrthas* including mountains, rivers, pools, temples, the region of *pitris*, and of the continents of Ketumāla, Bhāratavarṣa, Kimpuruṣa, and Plakṣa. Lastly may be noted the hymn to Nīlakaṇṭha (the blue-necked Śiva) and the Liṅgam (phallus).

The *Upodghāta* section consists of 34 chapters (65–98) and relates among other things the following : a description of the races of Prajāpati, of Kāśyapa, of Varuṇa, of Vaivasvata Manu, of Viṣṇu, and of the Gandharvas. Also we have an account of the Śrāddhas to which more than 10 chapters are devoted, of the descendants of Soma and of the Yadu race, and lastly, the dynasties of the Kali Age.

The last section entitled the *Upasaṁhāra Pāda* contains thirteen chapters where the periods of seven Manus, past and future, are given in detail. Besides a description of celestial regions, periodical destructions and regenerations are explained. The concluding chapters on the greatness of Gayā seem to be out of place and indicate a definite interpolation. Practically speaking the *Upasaṁhāra pāda* consists of only four chapters. According to its own version these four pādas or sections are said to contain 4,800, 3,600, 2,400 and 1,200 ślokas respectively, giving a total of 12,000 ślokas which roughly agrees with the extant editions. The six chapters forming the *Prakrīya pāda* of the published work constitute only 498 ślokas, the chapters of the *Anuṣaṅgapāda* contain 4,868 ślokas, of the *Upasaṁhāra* 1,477 verses and all altogether 10,991 verses, excluding the half-verses, colophons to chapters etc. There is then an apparent contradiction between the actual texts and that which could be gathered from internal evidence.[1]

A perusal of the contents gives us the following results. This Purāṇa has not been much tampered with, like others of its kind. It still contains original and valuable materials. It gives us the

[1] See Chapter 32.

geographical distribution of the world as known to the ancients. It is in a way an historical treatise giving the genealogy of not only gods, patriarchs and sages, but also of the kings of the lunar and solar races with their different branches. The section on the dynasties of the Kali Age shows that portion or the whole of it was revised sometime after the commencement of the Gupta era. It keeps the invariable form of the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas which is a dialogue started by one person making enquiries after things and answered by one who could speak with authority on the subject, that is, one well trained in traditional lore.

SECTION IV

Literature known to the Purāṇa

Notwithstanding the curious statement in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* that the Purāṇas as a class preceded the Vedas, we have indications in every chapter how this Purāṇa was indebted to the older Vedic literature from which it has freely drawn, and of which it makes no secret. For the term *iti śrutiḥi* occurs pretty frequently indicating that to be the opinion of the *śruti* or the Veda. There are sometimes *verbatim* citations as we shall see presently. The fact that the extant Purāṇa was revised in the epoch of the Guptas, gives the indication of the Purāṇa spreading over a number of centuries. In such a work interpolations are not unnatural and consequently we need not be amazed at references to post-Purāṇa literature also. From omissions and transpositions, from repetitions of the same śloka or account, one has to infer that the work has not been handled with the care that it deserves by the later redactors.[1] For example, a brief account of Vaiśāli dynasty occurs in chapter 70–23 ff; and also chapter 86, 3 ff.

Commencing with the Vedic literature, the Purāṇa seems to be familiar with the three great divisions of the Veda;—Saṁhitā, Brāhmaṇa and Upaniṣad.[2]

It also knows the Vedāṅgas. It does not however mention the name of any Brāhmaṇa or the Upaniṣad[3] but refers to Mantra, Brāhmaṇa and Kalpasūtra.[4] The term Āraṇyaka is mentioned in more than one place. It discusses at length in chapter 61 and elsewhere (chapter 104) how there was originally one Veda which the

[1] For repetitions of verses etc., see ch. 4, 51–60 and also ibid. 64-68: ch. 7, 29 and 50: also ibid 61 and 70. ch. 8, 4 and 6-7: ch. 6, 28-33 and ch. 8, 8-13. ch. 8, 19–20 and ch. 6, 45-46. etc.

[2] Chap. 1–200; 6.22.

[3] Chap. 20, st. 25; ch. 30, ch. 231.

[4] Chap. 58, st. 12-13. Ch. 30, 231; also chap. 6, 54 and 102.

Creator first revealed, and then points out the reasons for successive editions of the Vedas. Kalpa succeeding Kalpa, the sages 8,800 in number[1] were deputed to edit the Saṁhitās, and they are known by the significant term Mantrabrāhmaṇa kartāraḥ.[2] In chapter 104 the story is given how Vyāsa, unable to understand the intricacies of the Vedic texts, performed severe austerities when he got the divine light to collate and edit the four Vedas. This is in keeping with the statement in an earlier chapter[3] Vyāsa was assisted by four pupils Jaimini, Sumantu, Vaiśampāyana and Paila for the Sāma, Atharva, Yajus and Rig Vedas respectively. It is added that a fifth pupil of Vyāsa, Lomaharṣaṇa, was deputed to rearrange the *Itihāsa-purāṇa*. It would appear that the original Veda consisted of 100,000 *saṁhitās* which increased tenfold in course of time.[4] It is further said that the Yajus Saṁhitā was divided into four parts.[5] In this connection Taittirīya is mentioned (66). The Rig Veda was first divided into two parts. The editor of the second part Bāṣkali analysed it into four divisions or *śākhaṣ*, which were entrusted to Bodnya, Agnimāṭhara, Parāśara and Yājñavalkya. The editor of the first part was Indrapramti who taught it to the sage Mārkaṇḍeya.[6] Other *śākha-pravartakas* are Sākalya, Rathantara and Bharadvāja.[7] Of these Sākalya is said to be compiler of 5 *saṁhitās*[8]. Nirukta is mentioned and its authorship is attributed to one Rathītara.[9] The

[1] On this number see, Āp. Dh. II, 9, 23, 3-5 ; Yāj. III, 186.
[2] Chap. 61, 120-24.

[5] व्यस्यते ह्येकविद्यं तद्द्वापरेषु पुनः पुनः ।
ब्रह्मा चैतदुवाचाऽदौ तस्मिन्वैवस्वतेऽन्तरे ॥
आवर्तमाना ऋषयो युगाख्यासु पुनः पुनः ।
कुर्वन्ति संहिता ह्येते जायामानाः परस्परम् ।
अष्टाशीति सहस्राणि श्रुतर्षीणां स्मृतानि वै ।
ता एव संहिता ह्येते आवर्तन्ते पुनः पुनः ॥
श्रितादक्षिणपन्थानं ये श्मशानानि भेजिरे ।
युगे युगे तु ताः शाखा व्यस्यन्ते तैः पुनः पुनः ॥
द्वावरेष्विह सर्वेषु संहिताश्च श्रुतर्षिभिः ।
तेषां गोत्रेष्विमाः शाखा भवन्तीह पुनः पुनः ॥
ताः शाखास्तत्र कर्तारो भवन्तीह युगक्षयात् ॥

[3] 60, 11 f.
[4] *Ibid*. 7.
[5] *Ibid*. 7.
[6] *Ibid*. 24-27.
[7] *Ibid*. 32.
[8] *Ibid*. 63.
[9] Ch. 60-65 and 61-2.

Purāṇa proceeds to mention categorically the *padas* or *Saṃhitās* of these Vedic works. But as it stands the numerical analysis is quite unintelligible.

Rig Veda	...	8,600
Sāma Veda	...	8,014
Yajur Veda	...	12,000
Atharva Veda	...	...
Vājasaneyaka	...	2,200
Caraṇavidyā	...	6,026

The Purāṇa also accounts for the differences in *śākhas.*[1] Though the latter half of the Chapter (61) accounts for the necessity of different editions of the Vedas, the first half of the chapter is itself a treatise on Vedic literature.

Among the *Aṅgas* of the Vedas figure Mīmāmsā, Nyāya (Hetuśāstra), Dharmaśāstra, (Smṛtiśāstra), Purāṇa, Āyurveda, Dhanurveda, Gāndharva śāstra, and Arthaśāstra.[2] In an earlier chapter (58) Jyotiṣa as an *aṅga* is mentioned.[3] Āyur Veda which is attributed to Dhanvantari is said to be edited by Bharadvāja into eight parts which were imparted to his pupils.[4] The term Dharmaśāstra occurs in other places but no name is mentioned.[5] In a verse 109 of chapter 66 the expression is followed by an attribute *Purātane* which suggests that there were older Dharmaśāstras which have been lost beyond redemption. This corroborates the view of the late Bühler who held that there was an older *Mānavadharmaśāstra* which is lost to us. No details of Dhanur Veda are given though the term occurs in more than one place.[6] The Purāṇa has interesting details about Gāndharvam or science of music.[7] The name of the author is not given and the Purāṇa simply states that it speaks on the authority of ancient teachers on music.[8]

Other literature known to the Purāṇa are Vyākaraṇa and Bhāṣya.[9] There is only one reference to Vyākaraṇa in the whole Purāṇa, and we have to assume it must be a reference to Pāṇini's work. Equally rare is the use of Bhāṣya. In one place we hear of Bhāṣyavid[10] and from the circumstance in which this term Bhāṣyavid occurs in chapter 82.52 it can be conjectured that it refers to the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali. This is not improbable especially when a compiler's hand was

[1] Chapter 61, 7-9 and 73-77, Chapter 58, 12-13.
[2] *Ibid.* 78-79 ; also see chapter 58, 23-24.
[3] See also 66, 52.
[4] Chapter 92, 21-22.
[5] Chapter 1, 61 ; 66-109 ; 83-53.
[6] Chapter 30, 36 and 99, 202.
[7] Chapter 86-35 f. the whole of Chapter 87.
[8] Chapter 87. 1. For details see below a special section on this subject.
[9] Chapter 82, 52.
[10] Chapter 61. 103.

at work in the Gupta period. Though the Purāṇa is a regular treatise on the Śrāddha and other ceremonies connected with the Pitris, and though as many as fifteen chapters deal with it, it is a matter for surprise that the Purāṇa does not mention any *Gṛhya sūtra* by name. But it appears that the injunctions laid down in this Purāṇa with regard to technicalities and the details of the Śrāddha more or less correspond with those in the *Āsvalāyanā-gṛhyasūtra*.

In this connection mention may be made of a list of persons fit to be invited for Śrāddha purposes. What Prof. Hopkins has observed of the didactic epic is equally applicable to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. In furnishing the list it 'adds elements to the simpler statement of the earlier law-books'. What is interesting is that the same passages almost *verbatim* are found in the *Mahābhārata*,[1] and the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.[2] The list speaks of *Pāṅkteyas* or those who are worthy of sitting and eating in the same row. These are (i) those who have studied all Vedas, and practised austerities, (ii) expounders of Bhāṣya, (iii) of Vyākaraṇa, (iv) of Purāṇa, (v) of Dharmaśāstra, (vi) Triṇāciketu, (vii) Pañcāgni, (viii) Trisuparṇa, (ix) Saḍaṅgvid or one with knowlege of six *aṅgas*. (x) Sons of Brahmadeya, (xi) Chandogas, (xii) Jyeṣṭasāmagas, (xiii) those who have bathed in holy waters, (xiv) bathed in *avabhṛtas* of Yajñas, (xv) those who are addicted to truth and *svadharma*, (xvi) those who are not angry, (xvii) those who practise *śānti* or peace. Then it proceeds to give a list of *apāṅkteyas* or those unworthy to be invited.[3] It can be doubted whether these passages are not altogether later interpolations.

Vedic Citations in the Purāṇa

So far, we have been noticing generally the literary documents known to the Purāṇa. It has been seen that the Purāṇa is familiar with the four Vedas, the Upavedas, and the Upāṅgas. Let us now examine some of the passages which are either copies of the Vedic texts or imitations in an amended or emended form.

Rig Veda I. i. 1

Agni Mīḷe Purohitam

Vāyu P. Chapter 26. 17

ṛgvedam prathamam tasya tvagnimīḷe purohitam

Samaveda I. 1. cf. Ṛg. Veda 6.16.10

agni āyāhi vitaye gṛṇāno havya dātaye

[1] XIII. 90. 26-36.
[2] Chapter 82, 51–55. *Cf.* Manu (III. 184-5).
[3] *Ibid.* 66 ff.

Vāyu P. the same texts chapter 26.23

Yajurvedasaṃhitā I. 1.

Iṣe tvorje tvā vāyava sthā devo vaḥ savitā

Vāyu P. the same, chapter 26.90

Taittirīya Brāhmaṇam II. 8. 8.61

annam prāṇam annamapānamāhuḥ |
annam mṛtyum tasmu jivātumāhuḥ ||
annam brahmaṇo jarasam vadanti |
annamāhuḥ prajananam prajānam ||

Vāyu P. Chapter 14.15

annam prāṇstathāpānam mṛtyurjivatmeva ca |
annam brahma ca vijñeyam prajānam prasavastatha ||

Taitt. Brāh. I. 4. 10. 57

agnirvāva saṃvatsaraḥ |
ādityaḥ parivatsaraḥ ||
candramā idāvatsaraḥ |
vāyuranuvatsaraḥ ||

Vāyu P. Chapter 31, 29–32

ṛturagnistu yaḥ proktaḥ sa tu samvatsaromatah |
ādityeyastvasau sāraḥ kālagniḥ parivatsaraḥ ||
sa idāvatsaraḥ somaḥ purāṇe niścayo mataḥ |
āsu kartā ca lokasya sa vàyuranuvatsaraḥ ||

Taitt. Brāh. II ii, 41, 22.

sa bhūriti vyāharat sa bhūmimasṛjata |

Vāyu P. Chapter 101. 18.

bhūriti vyāhṛte pūrvam bhūrlokaśa tato bhavat |

Taitt. Brāh. Ibid.

sa bhuva iti vyāharat |
sontarikṣamasṛjata ||

Vāyu P. 1, 9

dvitīyo bhuvam ityukta antarikṣam tatobhavat |

Taitt Brāh. Ibid. 23

sa suvariti vyāharat |
sa divamasṛjata |

Vāyu P. Ibid.

tṛtiyam svaritītyukte divam prādurbabhūva ha |

Taitt. Brah. III, 12, 9

tapa āsit gṛhapatiḥ | brahma brahmā-bhavatsvayam |
irā patnī viśvasṛjām |
mṛtyustadā bhavaddhātā śamitogno viśāṃ patiḥ |

Vāyu P. Ch. II, 6-7

tapo gṛhapatiryatra brahmā brahmā bhavaḥ svayam |
iḷāya yatra patnītvam śāmitram yatra buddhimān||
mṛtyuścakre mahātejastasmin satre mahātmanām||

Taitt. Brah. II, 7, 10[1]

pañcava ṛtavaḥ saṃvatsaraḥ |
ṛtuṣveva saṃvatsare pratitiṣṭati||

Vāyu P.

yaccaiva pañcadhātma vai proktaḥ saṃvatsaro dvijaiḥi||

Taitt. Saṁhitā I, III, 14, 1

tvamagne rudro asuro maho divastvam
śardho mārutam pṛkṣa iśiṣe

Vāyu P. Ch. 22, 71

tvamagne rudro asuromaho divastvam sardho mārutam pṛkṣa iśiṣe.

Upaniṣadic Citations

Māhānārāyaṇopaniṣad : 74

prāṇānam granthirasi rudro māviśantakaḥ.

Vāyu P. Ch. 15.9

prāṇānam granthirasyātma rudro hyātmā viśantakaḥ

Ibid. 12.

ajāmekām lohita śuklakṛṣṇām bahvīm prajām janayantīm sarūpām
ajo hyeko juṣamāṇonuśete jagātyenām bhuktabhogāmajonyaḥ

Vāyu P. Ch. 20, 28

ajāmekām lohita śukla kṛṣṇām bahviḥ prajāḥ sṛjamānām sarūpāḥ |
ajo hyeko juṣamāṇonuśete jagātyenām bhukta bhogamajonyaḥ||

Kaṭhopaniṣad

puruṣānna param kimcit sā kāṣṭhā sā parāgatiḥ |

Vāyu P. Ch. 104.43

akṣarānna param kimcit sā kāṣṭhā sā parāgatiḥ |

Taittirīya Upa. 3.2

annadhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante |
annena jātāni jīvanti |

[1]*Note.*—In the *Taittirīya saṁhitā* the *Ṛtus* which are also known by the name of *Prayājas* I, VI, XI, 43 are taken as five, though the compiler of the *Saṁhitā* is not unaware of the sixth. Here *Hemanta* and *Śiśira* are taken together. I, VI, ii. 6.

Vāyu P. Ch. 15, 16
vardhante tena bhātāni tasmādannam taducyate||

Taitt. Upaniṣad Ānandavaili
yatovāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha|

Vāyu Purāṇa. Ch. 103. 10
tasmādvāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha|

Kenopaniṣad. 2.
śrotrasya śrotram manaso mano
yadvāco ha vācam sa prāṇasya
prāṇaścakṣuścakṣuratimucya dhīrāḥ
pretyāsmāllokādamṛtā bhavanti|

Vāyu P. Ch. 104. 37
yaccakṣuṣām cakṣuratha śrotrāṇām śrotramatyati|
tvakvacām rasānam tasya prāṇam prāṇasya yadviduḥ||

Muṇḍakopaniṣad 2.4
praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā brahmā tallakṣyamucyate|
apramattena veddhavyam śaravattanmayo bhavet||

Vāyu P. Ch. 20.5
praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā brahmā tallakṣyam uccyate|
apramattena veddhavyam śaravattanmayo bhavet||

Śvetāśvataropaniṣad. 3.16. Cp. *Gītā* 13.13
sarvataḥ pāṇipādam tatsarvatokṣiśiro mukham
sarvataḥ śrutimalloke sarvamāvṛtya tiṣṭhati||

Vāyu P. Ch. 14. 13 also 30. 182
sarvataḥ pāṇipādāntam sarvatokṣiśiromukham|
sarvataḥ śrutimalloke sarvamāvṛtya tiṣṭhati||

Other Citations

Bhagavad Gitā VI. 19
yathā dīpo nivātastho neṅgate sopamā smṛtā

Vāyu P. Ibid. 19. 37

Bha. Gītā 8. 17
sahasrayugaparyantamaharyadbrahmaṇo viduḥ|
rātrim yugasahasrāntām tehorātra vido janāḥ|

Vāyu P. Ch. 100. 131
caturyuga sahasrāntamaharyad brahmaṇo viduḥ||
rātrim yugasahasrāntamaho rātra vido janāḥ ||

Bha. Gītā III. 13
bhuñjate te tvagham pāpa ye pacantyātmakāraṇāt|

Vāyu P. Ch. 76. 20

ṛṇam ca bhuṅkte pāpātma yaḥ pacehyatmakāraṇāt |

Āśvalāyana śrauta sūtra II. 6

somāya pitṛumate svadhā namo
agnye kavyavāhanāya svadhānama iti ||

and *Āpastamba śrauta sūtra* I, 7, 3-4

somāya pitṛpitāya svadhānama iti dakṣiṇagnau juhoti |
yamāyāṅgirasavate pitṛmate svadha nama iti dvitīyāyam |
agnaye kavyavāhanāya svadha nama iti tṛtīyāyam

Vāyu P. Ch. 75. 56-57

agnaye kavyavāhanāya svadhā aṅgirase namaḥ |
somāya vai pitṛmate svadhā aṇgirase namaḥ |
yama caivāṅgirase svadhā nama iti bruvan |

Mahābhārata XIII, 137, 26, 30, 35

pāṅkteyāmsu pravakṣyāmi jyeyāste paṅkti pāvanāḥ |
tṛṇāciketaḥ pañcāgnistrisuparṇaḥ ṣaḍaṅgavit ||
brahmadeyānusamtānaschandago jyeṣṭa sāmagaḥ ||

* * * * *
* * * * *

ye ca puṇyeṣu tīrtheṣu abhiṣekakṛtaśramāḥ |
makheṣu ca samantreṣu bhavantyavabhṛtha plutāḥ ||
akrodhanāḥ hyacapalāḥ kṣānta dāntajitendriyāḥ |
sarvabhūta hita ye ca śrāddheṣvetannimaṇtrayāh ||
ye ca bhāṣya vidāḥ kecit ye ca vyākaraṇe ratāḥ |
adhīyate purāṇam ye ca dharmaśāstrānyathāpi ca ||

Vāyu P. 82. 52–55

sarva vedavratasnātāḥ pāṇktīnām pāvanāḥ dvijāḥ |
ye ca bhāṣyavido mukhyā ye ca vyākaraṇe ratāḥ |
adhīyate purāṇam ca dharmaśāstram tathaiva ca |
tṛṇāciketa pañcāgnistrisuparṇaḥ ṣaḍaṅgavit ||

This quotation is an instance of the Purāṇa quoting post-Purāṇic works. This section of ch. 82 of the Purāṇa (sl. 51-87) is clearly an interpolation and must have been adopted from the *Mahābhārata* where a fuller and continuous description of the subject is furnished.

SECTION V

A Critical Study of Indian Cosmogony

The problems offered by the mythological concepts of the creation of the world and the theory of fourteen worlds and of seven oceans as explained in the Purāṇa literature, have baffled the attempts of earnest

students of ancient Indian geography to find for them a rational explanation.[1] Let us see what solution the *Vāyu Purāṇa* furnishes.

The term Purāṇa as defined in this *Purāṇa*[2] shows that the created universe took its origin from the ultimate entity. Western philosophy teaches us that cosmological conceptions are not the same but differ in respect of every individual. There is the Supreme Being called Maheśvara or Brahman without whose aid Māyā cannot act. Māyā is Prakṛiti with whose help Īśvara engages himself in the work of creation. While Īśvara is the Creator, Jīva or the individual soul is the enjoyer. Creation and destruction can be connoted by two modern terms—evolution and involution. Two stages of evolution, the subtle and the gross, are distinguished (*sūkṣma* and *sthūla*). This universe is said to have originated from a mythical lotus (*lokapadma*)[3] grown in the navel of the great Īśvara. The second stage is reached when the five gross elements exist in their infinite form.

The account of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* about the fourteen lokas may be briefly given. Loka is eternal, Aloka is transient and Lokāloka is neither eternal nor transient. The latter is preceded and followed by Aloka and Nirāloka, the world of limitless darkness.[4] The philosophical view of these fourteen lokas is that there are fourteen stages (*sthānas*)[5] which are to be crossed by practice of yoga, tapas etc.

[1] Mr. R. Narayana Aiyar has made an attempt in this direction in his *History of the Bharatavarṣa*.
[2] Ch. I. 203.
[3] Ch. 34, 41 f.
[4] *Vāyu Purāṇa* Ch. 49. 144 ff. ch. 50. 156 ff.

चतुर्दशैवस्थानानि वर्णितानि महर्षिभिः ।
लोकाख्यानि तु यानि स्युर्येषु तिष्ठन्तिमानवाः ॥
सप्त तेषु कृतान्याहुरकृतानि तु सप्त वै ।
भूरादयस्तु संख्याताः सप्त लोकाः कृतास्त्विह ।
अकृतानि तु सप्तैव प्राकृतानि तु यानिवै ।
स्थानानि स्थानिभिः सार्धं कृतानि तु निबन्धनम् ॥
पृथिवीं चान्तरिक्षं च दिव्यं यश्च महः स्मृतम् ।
स्थानान्येतानि चत्वारि स्मृतान्यार्णवकानि च ॥
क्षयातिशययुक्तानि तथा युक्तानि वक्ष्यते ।
यानि नैमित्तिकानि स्युस्तिष्ठन्त्याभूतसंप्लवम् ॥
जनस्तपश्च सत्यं च स्थानान्येतानि त्रीणितु
ऐकान्तिकानि सत्वानि तिष्ठन्ती हाऽऽप्तसंयमात

Vāyu. ch. 101, 10–15.

to finally attain the *Satyaloka* from which there is no turning back. In the same way the *Vāyu Purāṇa* again explains away the seven worlds of the earth[1] and the seven oceans as alluding to the working of the seven *prakṛtis* from a philosophical view-point.[2] Thus the concept underlying the creation is, according to unambiguous statement of the Purāṇa, philosophical, and not material. The followers of the latter theory misinterpret these terms and try to locate some of them in Asia Minor and other parts of the known world.[3] There is besides the mythical Meru as the centre of the earth of seven islands which have again the *Jambū dvīpa* in their centre. Meru is mythical in the sense that it is said to belong to the world of gods.[4] In the light of the above data, the concept of fourteen *lokas*, of seven islands of the earth and of Meru is a philosophical concept and is allied more to the religious development than to physical entities constituting actual geographical divisions of the earth with mountains, rivers and cities.

There is one more thing that deserves some examination. It is the division of *Jambūdvīpa* into nine continents (*varṣas*) of which the *Bhārata varṣa* occupies the southernmost part of the hemisphere.[5]

It is a vexed question to identify Bharata after whose name this continent is known. There are a number of Bharatas and each Purāṇa creates some Bharata or other. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* speaks of him as Brahmodanāgni, son of Vaidyuta (*Laukikāgni*) who is the first son of Brahma. The same difficulty crops up when we define the limits of the *Bhārata-varṣa.* According to one version it is the region bounded on the north by the Himalayas and on the south by the ocean.[6] This country is said to have been subdivided into nine parts surrounded by the sea and consequently not easily accessible from one part to the other.[7] If we apply modern geographical

[1] These are Plakṣadvīpa, Śālmalidvīpa, Kuśadvīpa, Krauñcadvīpa Śakadvīpa, Puṣkaradvīpa, and Jambūdvīpa. (Ch. 49, 132.)

[2] Ch. 49, 180–185.

[3] See Q.J.M.S. Vol. xv, xvi and xvii, articles by V. Venkaṭāchala Aiyar.

[4] सर्वेदेवनिकायानि संनिविष्टान्यनेकशः ॥
देवलोको गिरौ तस्मिन्सर्वश्रुतिषु गीयते ॥

Ibid., 95. Chap. 34, 69.

See also Alberuni's *India* ch. xxiii.

[5] हिमाह्वं दक्षिणं वर्षं भरताय न्यवेदयत् ।
तस्मात्तद्भारतं वर्षं तस्य नाम्ना विदुर्बुधाः ॥

Ch. 33, 52.

[6] Ch. 45, 75.

[7] *Ibid* 78–80. These are Indradvīpa, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇi, Gabhastimān, Nāgadvīpa, Saumya, Gandharva and Vāruṇa and the last being that surrounded by the sea.

knowledge in our investigation, either the Purāṇa account must be taken to be wrong or the whole is legendary description drawn from the imagination of the poet.

In the absence of definite data we have to resort to philosophy again for light. The Purāṇa speaks of the saline ocean as representing the miseries of the world.

In the same way *Bhāratavarṣa* is a *karma bhūmi* while the remaining eight divisions represent the eight siddhis (*aṣṭaiśvarya*) as the result of proper practice of Karma.[1] If the hypothesis in the foregoing pages is granted we have to admit the Purāṇa's ignorance of regions beyond the Ancient Indian continent. But this could not be. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* has a tendency to view everything with a philosophical vision. There is room for the belief that genuine tradition has been mixed up with the mythical, and an endeavour to separate fact from fiction may not prove unfruitful.

This can be done only in the light of researches in archæology and geology. Progress in archæological and geological research has enabled some savants to come forward with new theories of identification of the Purāṇa divisions of the world. The identification of Rasātala or the Underworld with Central Asia including Tartary and Turkestan by Nundo Lal De,[2] Puruṣottamakṣetra with the modern Orissa division of Bihar and Orissa province,[3] the geological confirmation claimed for the great Deluge, the theory that the Dekhan plateau was once connected with Africa and Australia, and the probable connection of Dravidians with the Sumerians[4] are some examples. It may be that future research throws more light on some of these dark spaces of Ancient History enabling us to reconstruct a historical geography of ancient India.

The Nine Divisions of India

To what geographical territory the term *Bhāratavarṣa* is to be assigned is still a bone of contention among scholars. One school of scholars maintains that it means Indian empire as it is today, including perhaps Burma. Others are of opinion that *Bharatavarṣa* means Greater India and will therefore include Malaya Peninsula, Indian Archipelago, and even Indo-China. The earliest among modern writers on ancient geography of India is Mr. Cunningham. He gave the names of these nine divisions as furnished by the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Purāṇas* with the remark that this division

[1] Ch. 45, 77. For a detailed study of the subject see *History of the Bhāratavarṣa*.
[2] I.H.Q. Vols. I and II.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 659-665.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 25-47.

does not agree with that of Varāhamihira.[1] It would appear that the nine divisions refer to the Purāṇic geographical divisions of Ancient Indian continent which included Burma. In the absence of definite evidence our investigation may not take us much farther. But though the nine divisions are termed *dvipas*, we must understand the term in the sense in which Pāṇini, the grammarian, uses it. It is that territory which has, on its two sides, water. This means that rivers in India marked the boundary limits of these nine territorial divisions.

In determining approximately the boundary limits occupied by these nine territories we have to proceed with caution. The order in which the Purāṇa or Purāṇas mention need not deter us long.[2] There is no sacredness about the order in which these divisions are mentioned. Taking the first division Indradvīpa, it seems to be a reference to Burma. It is also known in literature as Aindra dvīpa. Ptolemy speaks of the coast of the Airrhadoi commencing with the eastern coast of the gulf of Bengal from the mouth of the Brahmaputra down to that of the Nāf or even the Arakan river. Gerini however identifies Airrhadoi with the Āndhras and infers that Ptolemy's is a reference to the coast of the Āndhras.[3] The argument adduced in favour of this is far-fetched and inconclusive. For the river Airāvadi which is in Burma has a closer affinity to Indra, for his riding animal is named Airāvata. Tradition has for long identified Indra as the *dikpāla* of the East, and Ptolemy is therefore right in his location of the Airrhadoi. It is then the territory between the rivers Brahmaputra and the Airāvati. Next in order is mentioned the territory known as Kaserumat or simply Kaserudvīpa. Kaseru is perhaps the same as Kazëḥ or Kasëḥ, Krasëḥ (Kasay) and Kassay refers to Manipūr and Assam in general[4]. Hence it seems that Kaseru is a corrupted form of Krasëḥ or Kasëḥ and is therefore a reference to Eastern Bengal and Assam. This identification gains support from the fact that the hills which separate Maṇipūr from the Assam valley are known even now as the Khasia hills.

Hereafter it would lead us astray if the order of the Purāṇa is strictly followed. It is not patent whether the Purāṇa aimed at any definite order in the enumeration of the various divisions. For Tāmravarṇi (also Tāmraparṇi) is mentioned as the third in order. It has been shown conclusively that in centuries before the Christian era the island of Ceylon was called Taprobane. That it was also

[1] Cal. edition 1924, p. 8. See also Alberuni's India, ch. xxix, esp. p. 296.
[2] See also Bhāskarācārya's *Siddhānta Śiromaṇi*, ch. iii, 41.
[3] *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography*, 1909, pp. 28–9.
[4] See Gerini, *Researches on Ptolemy*, p. 795.

a designation of the Sumatra island is obvious. Hence Ceylon is Taprobana major and Sumatra is Taprobana minor.[1] The Tāmraparṇi of the Purāṇa is the island of Ceylon and cannot be Sumatra, being far away from the Indian continent. The ninth dvīpa which is defined by the *Vāyu Purāṇa* as that which is surrounded by the sea[2] is probably the Kumāri so named by Rājaśekhara in his *Kāvyamīmamsa*[3]. In defining the limits of Kumāridvīpa, Rājaśekhara says that here are found seven hills : Vindhyas, Pāriyātra, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣaparvata, Mahendra, Sahya, and Malaya.[4] While Pāriyātra, Śuktimān and Ṛkṣaparvata are identified with portions of the Vindhya range, the Mahendra is Eastern ghats commencing from Kaliṅga and joining with the Malaya hills. The Sahya again is a part of the Western ghats. Thus according to Rājaśekhara it is South India, of which the Vindhya ranges formed the northern limit.[5] We have thus defined the limits of four dvīpas and we have therefore to look for the remaining five in northern India, north of the Vindhyas and south of the Himalayas. As Indra is the *dikpāla* of the East, Varuṇa is that of the West. It is significant that the Purāṇa begins with Indra and ends with Varuṇa. Hence *Varuṇa dvīpa* is the Western portion of India and has to be located to the west of the Gāndhāra country. For Gāndhāra which perhaps takes its name from the residents of the territory who were known to be Gandharvas is mentioned as a listinct division separate from *Varuṇadvīpa*. As *Indradvīpa* is the easternmost, the *Varuṇadvīpa* is the westernmost.

The remaining three are *Nāgadvīpa*, *Gabhastimān* and *Saumya*. Gerini's identification of Nāgadvīpa with Ceylon or a part of Ceylon loes not seem to be conclusive.[6] In fact it seems to be that there vere a number of small islands round about Ceylon and in the ndian Archipelago which were the home of the ancient nāga tribes. n the list of nine divisions both *Tāmraparṇi* and *Nāgadvīpa* are nentioned. If the former is identified with Ceylon, the *Nāgadvīpa* annot be Ceylon. If it is to be maintained that it was a part of eylon, the ancient Purāṇa compiler could not have assigned two

[1] *Ibid.* p. 651.
[2] *Ayamtu navamsteṣām dvīpaḥ sāgara saṃvṛtaḥ*, ch. 45, 80.
[3] Gaekwad Or. Ser. No. 1, p. 92.
[4] अत्र च कुमारीद्वीपे—

विन्ध्यश्च पारियात्रश्च शुक्तिमानृक्षपर्वतः ।

महेन्द्रसह्यमलयाः सप्तैते कुलपर्वताः ॥

I. Ch. XVII.

[5] See Nundo Lal De's *Geographical Dictionary*, Cal. Orient Series, pp. 149, 168, 196 etc. also J. B. O. R. S., 1922, pp. 41-43.
[6] *Op. cit.*, p. 380.

out of 9 divisions to Ceylon, which is insignificant in size, if the whole of India is to be reckoned. Therefore one has to seek elsewhere this *Nāgadvīpa* of the Purāṇa. Nāga also means elephants. The island of Elephanta can be a possible conjecture. It is very important to note here that the Tamil literary tradition locates nāgadvīpa in the neighbourhood of Gāndhāra, and recognises both as divisions of the Jambūdvipa.[1] Two more divisions remain, and these are *Gabhastimān* and *Saumya* which must be territorial units lying to the east of the Gāndhara and to the west of Assam and possibly to the north of the Vindhyas. *Saumya* may mean moon or cool and moist. *Gabhastimān* may mean sun, or hot and dry. It may, therefore, be surmised that these divisions are after the nature of the soil. *Saumya* may roughly correspond to Bengal and the United Provinces to the east of Delhi, and *Gabhastimān* to the Delhi province and States of Rājputana.

SECTION VI

Religion and Philosophy of the Purāṇa

The philosophical portions of the Purāṇa are to be handled with discrimination and good sense. Among the six schools of Hindu Philosophy, three schools, the Vedānta, the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga are in evidence. While the Vedānta principles underlie the philosophic concept of the whole Purāṇa, the Yoga seems to preponderate at first sight. Touches of the Sāṁkhya doctrines are indeed there, but are not the prevailing factor. No doubt the place of honour is given to the Yoga, its principles and practice, besides a special description of the *Pāśupata Yoga*. There are roughly ten chapters on this subject including the three (11, 14 and 15) on the *Pāśupata Yoga*. The other chapters relate to accidents to Yogas (*Yogāpasargas*), powers acquired by Yoga (*Yogaiśvaryas*), purity in the practice (*śaucācāralakṣaṇam*), the result of that practice (*paramāśrama prāpti*); the yoga of the incarnation of Māheśvara (*māheśvarāvatāra yoga*). Other characteristics of the Yoga quoted piecemeal in the last chapters of the book (100–2) deal with descriptions of celestial regions, periodical destructions, and creations. The general chapters on the practice of yoga and the results thereof not only fall in with the precepts and the tenets of the Yoga school of philosophy but also seem to anticipate the Yoga school still to come.[2] It is not easy to fix definite chronological limits to the origin of the Yoga school as such. This practice said to be peculiar to the Buddhists has been

[1] See the interesting essay of Prof. H. Jacobi entitled *Über Das Ursprungliche Yoga system* (Berlin, 1929).

[2] See *Maṇimenalai*, XI, ll. 17–21.

traced back to the Chalcolithic period of Indian History. In the recent discoveries at Mohenjadāro and Hārappa there are sculptures, broken statues, the prototype of the images of Buddha and Jina, ' with head, neck and body quite erect and half-shut eyes fixed on the tip of the nose,' the exact posture of one practising yoga . . . . ' the yatis of the protohistoric and prehistoric Indus valley.'[1]

This is exactly what the Purāṇa furnishes :

संवृतास्योऽवबद्धाक्ष उरो विष्टभ्य चाग्रतः—
किंचिदुन्नामितशिराः शिरोग्रीवां तथैव च ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥

Vāyu Ch. 11, 15-16.

The inference, then, is that the Yoga tradition is a very old tradition traceable to the third and fourth millennium B. C. The Purāṇa came to narrate this ancient tradition and it is probable that after the introduction of the Yoga school as such, its philosophical tenets were ushered in, as supplementing in a manner the old tradition. For example, mention is made of the eight limbs (*aṅgas*) of the Yoga.[2] These are *āsanam* (sitting posture), *prā-ṇarōdha* (suppression of the breath), *pratyāhara* (abstention from sense objects), *dhāraṇī* (mental concentration), *dhyānam* (religious meditation), *samādhi* (ecstatic contemplation on the supreme soul), *yama* (paramount duties), and *niyama* (minor duties).

This agrees with the statement of Patañjali, yama-niyamāsana prāṇāyāma-pratyāhāra-dhāraṇadhyāna-samādhayoṣṭāvaṅgāni.[3]

In the *Maitri-upaniṣad* however only six *aṅgas* of the yoga are referred to, and *yamaniyamas* have been omitted.

tathā tatprayogakalpaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ pratyāhāro dhyānam dhāraṇa tarkaḥ samādiḥ ṣaḍaṅga ityucyate yogaḥ.[4] From this one can see the gradual development of the Yoga system. The statement of the Purāṇa with regard to the eight *aṅgas* occurs in the chapter entitled *Vyāsasaṁśayāpanodanam*, which at first sight seems out of place. For the actual narration of the Purāṇa has ended with the previous

[1] R. Chanda, *memoirs of the Arch. Survey of India* No. 41, pp. 33-34.

[2] आसनं प्राणरोधश्च प्रत्याहारश्च धारणा ।
ध्यानं समाधिरेतानि यमैश्च नियमैः सह ।
अष्टाङ्गानि यदर्थं च चरन्ति मुनिपुङ्गवाः ॥

Ch. 104, 24-25.

[3] *Yoga sūtras* II, 29.

[4] VI, 18, Ānand. Series : *Upaniṣadām samuccayaḥ*, p. 421.

chapter. If it is contended that it forms a part of the Purāṇa in question, then the composition of this particular chapter is to be assigned to the epoch immediately following that of Patañjali, the author of the *Yogasūtra* who perhaps flourished in the 4th century A.D.[1]

History teaches us that the Yoga school which died hard in this ancient land came to an end with the commencement of the Christian era. The Buddha was perhaps the last representative of the old Yoga school in practice. The *advaita* school which became more and more popular and claimed a larger number of adherents to its fold incorporated into it the salient features of both the Yoga and the Sāṁkhya so that the general principles of different schools became common and readily acceptable. This metamorphosis took place, we are led to conjecture, in the period of the *Upaniṣads*. For the *Upaniṣads* are nothing but Vedānta treatises, effecting a reconciliation with other schools of thought and philosophy. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* is the typical representative of this transformation, as it nowhere preaches exclusive worship of a particular deity. It speaks of Śiva Puram and Viṣṇu Puram; of the greatness of Śiva and of Viṣṇu and of Brahmā, thus seeming to inaugurate a system of preferential worship of the different deities. But in the whole of a chapter (66) it knocks down the theory of the worship of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā as separate deities and as different from one another. It is explicit when it says[2] there is only one supreme Being whom it calls Nārāyaṇa, the god who finds his bed in the waters of the ocean, for it may be remembered the first element created was water [3]; and Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva are its different manifestations charged with special duties to be discharged.[4]

It characteristically remarks[5] that he who finds out difference among these deities is a sinner against God and he who finds

[1] Hopkins, J. A. O. S. XXII, pp. 335-36. J. H. Woods *Intro. to the Yoga System of Patañjali* H. O. S. Vol. 17.

[2] रुद्रं ब्रह्माणमिन्द्रं च लोकपालानृषीन्दनून् ।
देवं तमेकं बहुधा प्राहुर्नारायणं द्विजाः ॥

Vāyu Purāṇa, 66.122.

[3] *Ibid*, Ch. 23.110.

[4] एकात्मा स त्रिधा भूत्वा संमोहयति यः प्रजाः ।

[2] *Ibid.*, 1:6.

[5] एकं निन्दति यस्तेषां सर्वानेवस निन्दति ।
एकंयो वेत्ति पुरुषं तमाहुर्ब्रह्मवादिनम् ॥

Ibid., Ch. 66.114.

similarity among these deities is a man of knowledge. The Paramātma or Yogeśvara engages himself in different *līlas* or sports and each *līlā* takes the character of an incarnation, and new names are assigned to each of them to differentiate the one from the other.[1]

It then transpires that the Purāṇa soars high in the realm of *advaita* philosophy which knows of only one Supreme Being *nirguṇa* (void of attributes), all the others being His manifestations. The following expressions clarify this statement :

Pradhāna Puruṣa, *Kṣetrakṣetrajña*, *Sadasadātmaka*, *Brahmasatram Sanātanam* etc., 101.86.

The aim of the philosophical teaching of this Purāṇa is that the world is pervaded by Māya, and that there is no reality about it.[2] Pradhāna, Prakṛti and Māya are all synonymous terms. The only real thing is Iśvara, Maheśvara, Nārāyaṇa, Ādi-Brahmā or whatever name we are pleased to give it. What is needed is the realisation of the oneness of this real Being. For this the Purāṇa preaches the path of Yoga, taking care at the same time to mention that Yoga is rooted in Karma, with the implication that only a Karmayogin can become a Jñana-yogin.[3] In recommending this supreme path of Yoga, the Purāṇa does not fail to mention the general reflections on the subject by other schools of philosophy, especially Vedānta and Sāṁkhya. This is how we have to interpret the Vedānta and Sāṁkhya portions or rather the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga portions. One more evidence to show that the Purāṇa has a leaning towards the yogins is the fact that it reports[4] that the Siddhās or yogins will be wandering in different disguises in the world, and a man of wisdom must take care to offer *pūja* to them whenever they come to him. Another injunction of the Purāṇa [5]

[1] See the whole of the chapter entitled *Māheśvaravatāra Yoga*.

[2] माययाकृतमाचष्टे मायो देवो महेश्वरः ।
Ch. 101.219.

[3] कर्माभ्यासकृताशुद्धिः वेदान्तेषुपलक्ष्यते ।
Ibid., 101.87.

[4] सिद्धा हि विप्ररूपेण चरन्ति पृथिवीमिमाम् ।
तस्मादतिथिमायान्तं अभिगच्छेत्कृताञ्जलिः ॥
Ch. 71.74.

[5] सहस्रशस्तु विप्रान्वै भोजयेद्यावदागतान् ।
एकस्तु योगवित्प्रीतः सर्वानर्हति तच्छृणु ॥
ब्रह्मचारि सहस्रेण योगी ह्येको विशिष्यते ।
71.76 *Ibid.*, 69.

is that these *siddhas* and *yatis* (ascetics) must be fed on the śrāddha occasion. A śrāddha performed with one yogin is said to be superior to a śrāddha with a thousand Brahmans or brahmacāriṇs. The practice of feeding ascetics and yogins for the śrāddha had long fallen into disuse. And the fact that the Purāṇa is full of it, bears ample testimony to its antiquity. This is not all. There is no reference in this Purāṇa to the Tantric system of worship which consists of Devi being regarded as Śakti. Though we do not know for certain when this particular form of worship came into being, we know this for certain that it was not popularly prevalent in the age when the *Vāyu Purāṇa* was composed.

Added to this is the fact that the Purāṇa does not refer to the Buddha or his tenets. The same may be said of Jainism. No doubt the terms arhāya, buddhaye, buddhāya occur and are used as the names of Śiva and in their ordinary meaning one worthy of honour, one full of wisdom etc.[1] In fact the very term Buddha in the sense of jñāni occurs in the chapter on Pāśupata Yoga[2]. Mention was made of the Pāśupata-yoga described in detail in the Purāṇa. The *Vāyavīya saṃhitā* of the *Śiva Purāṇa* has also a section on the *Pāśupatīyavratam*. Besides these stray expressions which have the ordinary meaning, we do not come across any special reference to either of these monastic sects. It is therefore inferable to assign to this Purāṇa a date earlier than the fifth century B. C. A study of the relevant chapters (11, 14 and 15) shows that the Yoga under reference is only the exalted form of *prāṇāyāma* constituting pratyāhāra, āsanam, dhāranam, dhyānam which are the means to the application of yoga in practice (*yoga pravṛtti*). To this end cleansing of the body of all unwholesome matter, and keeping under control the five vital airs, prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna, and vyāna are recommended. The term *pāśupata* comes from the expression Paśupati, the lord of creatures. It is an epithet in use in Vedic literature as synonym of Rudra.[3]

We know of an Upaniṣad *Atharvaṣiras* devoted to the Pāśupata theology. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* refers to this system. The Pāśupata are *Ūrdhvaretas* (eternal Brahmacārins), tapasvinaḥ (penance-performers), and have their bodies smeared with sacred ashes. It is significant to note that this purāṇa contains the earliest reference to the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas.[4]

It is said that in the twenty-eighth *mahāyuga* when Viṣṇu incarnates himself as Vāsudeva on the earth, Śiva takes the incarnation of

[1] Ch. 97, 172 and 176.
[2] Ch. 11, 9.
[3] See Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*.
[4] See R. D. Bhandarkar : J. B. B. R. A. S., 1908, p. 151.

Lakuli by Yogamāya and enters a certain dead body in the burial ground of Kāyāvarohaṇa, a siddhakṣetra. His pupils are four: Kuśika, Gārgya, Mitraka and Ruṣṭa who will be initiated into what is also known as *Māheśvaryam Yogam* and who will find solace in the Rudralokam.[1]

This reference has an important historical bearing, It demonstrates the period when the subsect Lakuliśas had come into being. Bhandarkar assigns their origin to about the first century A. D., though it cannot be accepted as final. Epigraphical and archæological testimony connote some such system in vogue. An inscription in an old shrine near the temple of Ēkliṅgi, near Uḍaipūr has it that Śiva was incarnate in that region with a club (*lakula*) in his hand and the modern Kārvān in Rajputana is identified with Kāyāvarohaṇa as per local *māhātmya*.[2]

Added to this is the fact that a good number of Lakulīśa images have been found in Gujarat and Rājputana with this peculiarity, viz., Śiva having two arms and a small rod in one of his hands. Besides, the South Indian inscriptions[3] call for notice the Lakulīśa Pāśupatas. This proves beyond contradiction that the sect spread itself out as far south as the Tamil countries. A study of the Śaiva literature inclines us to divide the whole body of the Śaivas into two classes, the Āgamic and non-Āgamic. To the latter class belong the Pāśupata Śaivas among whom a number of subsects can be distinguished. In the category of the Āgamic followers of the Śaiva school come the Kāṣmir Śaivas, Vīra Śaivas and the followers of the Śaiva Siddhānta. It would appear that the Pāśupatas did not accept the *Āgamas*, or rather the Āgama school was a later growth in the tree of Indian Śaivism. The difference of these new schools is minor, and is seen in the fact that the Āgamic Śaivas do not accept the theory of incarnation of Śiva as such though their books are full of legends illustrating the different manifestations of invisible forms. It is important to note, however, that the Śaiva devotees in the Tamil land and the Vīra Śaivas are styled Māheśvaras[4] thus showing the closer affinity of their doctrines to the original Pāśupata sect. For, according to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, the Pāśupata Yogam is nothing but the Māheśvaryam Yogam[5]. If this is understood the

[1] See Vāyu Purāṇa ch. 23, st. 218-24.

[2] In South India it is interesting to know that Kānci, Kumbakonum and Negapatam are celebrated as Kāyārohana Kṣetras.

An. R of Ar. Dept. 1906-7 pp. 179-192.

Cp. Fleet, J. R. A. S. 1907 p. 419 ff.

[3] See S. Ind. Ins. vol. III, No. 18 pp. 27-29. *Cp.* Ep. Rep. 443 of 1914 and 109 of 1912.

[4] *Cp.* the expression Maheśvara pūja.

[5] Chapter 23-224.

imaginary difference between later and old schools of Śaiva philosophy is bound to disappear. From this one has to infer that these philosophical sections of the Purāṇa were composed in the pre-Āgamic epoch. The above examination may then lend the impression that the Purāṇa is sectarian in outlook and is a document of the early Śaiva school. That there is no warrant for this impression has already been indicated. Besides, we have the following. There are two informing chapters (97 and 98) entitled *Viṣṇumāhātmya kīrtanam* which, far from being sectarian in character, soars aloft in the region of *advaita* philosophy.[1] The legends of Viṣṇu are handled with equal interest, importance and prominence. This is not all. The Purāṇa characterises the Supreme Being with the appellation of Nārāyaṇa and this Being by contact with the respective *guṇas*, assumes different forms. He is Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. He is Rudra, Indra, Lokapālas, Sages, etc.[2] Nārāyaṇa is not taken here as a sectarian Vaiṣṇava deity but as Supreme Being which exhibits itself as *kṣetrajña* and *bījam*, *prakṛti* and *yoni*.[3]

He is Īśvara or Yogīśvara.[4] We may refer in this connection to some quotations from this Purāṇa by Vācaspatimiśra in his explanations on the 5th *sūtra* of Book IV. The *sūtra* is ' Actions are many and different. The mind that urges them is only one.'

pravṛttibhede prayojakaṃ cittamekamanekeṣām ||

The Purāṇa which stands for the social polity of *varṇāsrama dharma* and for the promotion of *yajñas* and *dāna*, extols *tapas* or penance performance as the superior *dharma* leading to *Kaivalya* or supreme isolation.[5]

References again to theistic yoga are in evidence. There is an interesting reference to Pañcaśikha who is said to be a sage and a son of the Creator.[6] The term occurs with other equally important names like those of Voḍhu, Āsuri and Kapia who are all reckoned as Brahma's sons. Students of Indian philosophy have been puzzled with this name Pañcaśikha, who is regarded to be the father of theistic yoga and author of a manual of *sūtras* which is now lost to us.[7] In the light of the references to him in the *Mahābhārata*[8] Pañcaśikha seems to be a historical personage. The epic has it that he was the originator of the Vaiṣṇava sect, the *Pāñcarātra*, and this is

[1] See for example, sl. 78 ff.
[2] Chapter 66, 101 ff., chapter 119–123; chapter 101, 228; chapter 104. 43-58.
[3] Chapter 101. 228.
[4] Patañjali, *Yoga Sûtras*.
[5] Chapter 57, 115 to the end.
[6] Chapter 101, 388.
[7] See Keith, *Sāṃkhya System*, pp. 42–4 (Cal). Garbe, *Sāṃkhya Philosophie*, p. 34.
[8] XII, 218–14, see also Hopkins' *Great Epic*, p. 144.

not impossible as the Vaiṣṇava theology has its basis on Sāṃkhya-yoga.[1]

The other names refer again to historical philosophers of ancient India, Voḍhu, Kapila and Āsuri. In the *pitritarpana* portion of the *Gṛhya sūtras* of the Ṛg. Veda, Weber informs us that Kapila, Āsuri, Pañcaśikha and Voḍha occupy a very honourable place.[2] Voḍhu again figures as a teacher in the epic as also Kapila and Āsuri.[3] All of them are, according to the Vāyu Purāṇa, sons of Brahmā, the Creator and Voḍhu is placed before Kapila, Āsuri and Pañcaśikha. To the last of these Garbe[4] assigns the date of the first century A.D. and if this were to be taken as the working basis, Āsuri whom the *Māhābhārata* claims as a teacher of Pañcaśikha must be assigned to the same period. In the evidence of Āsuri's name being mentioned in literary works of a different character and of different epochs, it cannot be that Āsuri is a mere name as Prof. Keith would have it.[5] Whether Pañcaśikha was his pupil or no, there can be no doubt about the historic Āsuri as also historic Voḍhu and Kapila.[6] If we place any faith in the order in which the Purāṇa mentions the names as an evidence of chronology, Voḍhu is earlier in time than Kapila, the celebrated philosopher. It would appear that these with their forerunners Sanaka, Sanātana and Sanantana belonged to a common school of philosophy which became lost in obscure tradition at a very early period. But tradition which died hard in this land claimed a divinity to these ancient teachers by making all of them sons of the Creator.

The closing portions of the chapter (57) reveal a certain stage in the evolution of the life of ancient Indians. Sacrificial rituals and ceremonies have lost their ancient glamour, and their objective was an intense search after truth by renunciation and deep contemplation. This presupposes a period when the germs of future philosophical systems have been laid. The different systems are mingled together so much that it is impossible to say whether the teachings are of any one of the schools, like the Sāṁkhya, Yoga or the Vedānta. In this respect the Purāṇa is on a par with the Upaniṣads. Many passages may be cited embodying monistic principles. The whole of chapter (66) is one of the examples in point.[7] After all the end and aim of the realisation of the three Puruṣārthas, Dharma, Artha, and Kāma is the

[1] See J. N. Farquhar: *Religious Literature of India*, p. 99.
[2] *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 236 n.
[3] XII, 218, 14.
[4] *Sāṁkhya Philosophie*, p. 34.
[5] *Sāṁkhya System*, p. 41.
[6] Compare the version of the Chinese translation of the commentary on the *Sāṁkhya Kārika* in the *Bulletin d'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient* IV, 59.
[7] See also Chapter 101, 105 ff., 102, 131–2, 71–3.

attainment of salvation or Mokṣa. This is different for the diverse schools of religion, prevalent from earliest times. By making a statement like the following

अभावः पुनरुत्पत्तौ शान्तानामर्चिषामिव ।

the Purāṇa seems to reiterate (Chapter 7–42) the *advaita* conception of Mokṣa.[1] In another place it preaches the lofty doctrine of the *advaitasiddhi*.[2] Again the *Pariṇāma vivṛtti* idea accepted by Śaṅkara, the founder of the *advaita* philosophy is elaborated in chapter 59, st. 70–76.[3]

Let us now examine some more passages which have *Sāṁkhya* tendencies in them. Much material is scattered in chapters 102–3. Prakṛti is equivalent of Pradhāna or Māyā, and the great Īśvara is said to uphold this Māyā.[4] This is exactly in line with the doctrine of the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniaṣd* IV. 10.

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरं ।
तस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत् ॥

Maheśvara is described here as the lord of Māya and therefore the Prakṛti mentioned here is not an independent Prakṛti of the advanced Sāṁkhya school but an entity dependent upon the Supreme Being.[5]

The spirit underlying the doctrine of three *guṇas* is Sāṁkhya but this conception is associated with the doctrines of other schools of philosophy or religious sects.[6] We thus find the systems of philosophy in their crude stages; their full development is still a thing of the future, another evidence in favour of the antiquity of the Purāṇa.

[1] See also chapter 104–97.
[2] Chapter 101–88.
[3] For other references to the *Advaita* principles, see chapter 66, 143; 79–95: 97; 80 ff; 100, 242 f., 101, 26 ff; *Ibid.* 79–80 ff., 105–7; 228; 104, 29–30.
[4] 101, 218–19.
[5] Intro. p. XI of the *Śvetāśvatara Up.* Pāṇinī Office, Allahabad, 1916.
[6] 103, 24 ff., chapter V. 17–20.

SECTION VII

Agastya and Greater India

Among India's sages and seers, Agastya is supposed to have been the L'Indoisateur. From his original abode in Benares, the legends say, he travelled to the far south, made the forest regions of the Dekhan and South India habitable,[1] and established his southern home at the Podiyal hills, a name familiar to the students of Śangam literature. Tradition affirms that this enthusiastic adventurer did not rest content with the cultural conquest of the Dakṣiṇāpatha. He crossed the seas to the Indian Archipelago and pursued his mission with zeal and zest that the cult of Agastya took deep root in the isles of Sumatra, Java and Bali.[2] Scholars who have examined the inscriptions and studied the sculptures with meticulous attention which they deserve, have proved to demonstration that the worship of Agastya is an established fact in these islands.

Tradition handed down by the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas in general and Tamil literary works in particular with regard to Agastya's mission and conquest is corroborated by epigraphic and sculptural evidences not only in South India but in the islands of the Indian Archipelago.[3] Among other Purāṇas the *Skanda Mahāpurāṇa* and the *Agnipurāṇa* furnish us with details as to the mode of worship of Agasteśvara. Confining ourselves to the data furnished by the *Vāyu Purāṇa* we find that Agastya who is celebrated by *Agastya kuṇḍam* in Benares (108, 45), and *Agastya padam* in Gayā (109, 19) and (111, 53) even to this day, visited a number of islands in the Indian ocean. A whole chapter (ch. 48) entitled *Bhuvana-vinyāsa* is devoted to an account of what the Purāṇa calls six *anudvī-pās*. The geography seems to tally with our knowledge of these

[1] Rāmā : II, 11, 81 : VI, 117, 13–14.

[2] See B. R. Chatterji, *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia*. p. 80 (Cal. Univ. 1928)

[3] See the learned paper of O. C. Gangoly on 'the Cult of Agastya and the origin of Indian Colonial Art,' *Q.J.M.S.*, Vol. XVII, 3 : January, 1927

places. The substance of the chapter can be briefly stated. South of the Bhāratavarṣa, there is the *mahārṇava* which we can easily identify with the Indian Ocean. Here are found scattered a number of islands cut off from one another. Among these not far from the Jambudvīpa or the Indian continent lie six small islands. These are Aṅgadvīpam, Yamadvīpam, Malayadvīpam, Śaṅkhadvīpam, Kuśa (Kumuda ?) dvīpam and Vārāhadvīpam. All these are full of different classes of *mlecchas* or the uncivilised. Of these Aṅgadvīpam is said to be a part of the Nāgadeśa and Śaṅkhadvīpam is again a Nāgadeśa where a Nāga king Śaṅkhamukha had his capital. The Malayadvīpam is said to be reputed for sandalwood and for the mountain Mahāmalaya, which is said to be a second *mandara*. It is the residence of Agastya worshipped both by the *devas* and the *asuras*. On the other side of Malaya is located Trikūṭa where is the great city, Laṅkā, the residence of the Rākṣasas. The Malayadvīpa is identified with the modern Sumatra where the chief mountain bears the name Malaya. It is not possible here to enter into a minute discussion of the geography of these islands from indigenous and other sources. Such investigation will neither take us to greater lengths nor produce always certain results.

The Kuśadvīpa is identified with the Sunda Archipelago.[1] The Vārāhadvīpa is possibly the Hog Island near the west coast of Sumatra.[2] The Yamadvīpa, according to Gerini, cannot be Java but can be identified with Yen-mo-na of Hiouen Tsang (629–45 A. D.) which is placed to the south-west of Mahā Campā, and therefore is an island either on the south of the Malaya peninsula or the northern part of Sumatra.[3] The Malayadvīpa which occurs in the Kalyāṇi inscriptions of Pegu of the 12th century[4] is identified with Malaya peninsula forming the southern end of the Indo-China.[5] In the face of the Purāṇa calling it an *anudvīpa* this identification cannot be said to be final. The Aṅgadvīpa is probably Angaman of Marco Polo, and therefore the islands of Andāmān.[6] It is difficult to fix the location of Śaṅkhadvīpa. Gerini evidently has no occasion to examine it. But it may be a reference to Tonkin and Chēhkiang[7] whose early populations appear to have belonged to the same racial stock. The local legends ascribe a Nāga origin to their ancient kings, and further the names of their ancient capitals are connected with the king of the serpents. These remarkably coincide with the Vāyu version. Another interesting feature is that these ancient

[1] Gerini, *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography*, London (1909), p. 237.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 448, 677.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 464–5.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 395.
[7] I have followed Gerini's researches and the authorities cited by him. *Ibid.*, pp. 319–322

capitals are built in the shape of a conch-shell or *śaṅkha*. One of the cities built in this shape in 255 B.C. is Levāthāñ, or Lo-chêng. It also occurs in the inverted form Thāñ-khā-lū, in Chinese, Chéng-kó-lu or Chēng-kó-lou = Śaṅkhala? Still more interesting is the account of the Müang yōng chronicle which speaks of the conquest of Yünnan and Kiao-Chi by Aśoka. Whether this is true or no, the fact is that the Hindu monarchy was established about 258 B.C. in Tonkin, if not earlier. In these circumstances the identification of Śaṅkhadvīpa with Tonkin seems to be satisfactory.

Is Tṛṇabindu Tṛṇadhūmāgni?

Intimately connected with the legend of Agastya is the episode of Tṛṇadhūmāgni or Tolkāppiyanār the reputed grammarian of the ancient Tamil Land. There is a Tamil tradition, as pointed out by Naccinārkkiniyar in his learned commentary on the *Tolkāppiyam*, that this Tṛṇadhūmāgni was a disciple of Agastya to whom again Tamil tradition assigns a grammar which is now lost. According to this tradition Tṛṇadhūmāgni was the son of Jamadagni, and Agastya married the sister of Pulastya, named Lopāmudrā.[1] Let us turn our attention to the monuments of Java which are full of the portraits of Agastya and Tṛṇabindu. The most interesting of all is the one at Tjandi Redjo, Java, where two small figures in ascetic robes are found on either side of the main figure which is Agastya. Gangoly is of opinion that the two small figures probably refer to his disciples Tṛṇavindu and Marīci.[2] And this is not impossible in the face of a similar portrait in stone where it is inscribed 'Bhagavān Tṛṇabindu maharṣi'.[3] Perhaps Tṛṇadhūmāgni and Tṛṇabindu are identical names.

There is again a Tṛṇabindu tradition in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. It occurs in more than one place. Among these references, those in the chapters (70, 30 f and 86, 15 f) are important; while in the former Tṛṇabindu is said to be a son of Dama, who is a grandson of the great Marutta Cakravarti, in the other, Tṛṇabindu is removed from Dama by seven generations. The term *dāyadah* used in this connection is significant.[4] For the term also stands to denote a distant descendant of the family. Having thus reconciled the apparently conflicting accounts, we can proceed to examine the history of Tṛṇabindu. He had a daughter who is named Iḍivilā in one place and Draviḍā in another place. In both places it is said that she was the mother of Viśravas, and also wife of Pulastya. It

[1] *Eḻuttutikāram Siṟappuppāyiram*, Saiva Siddhanta publication 1923, pp. 14-15.
[2] *Q.J.M.S.*, Vol. XVII, p. 181 and figure (9).
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 185.
[4] Ch. 70, 30.

would then appear that the Vaiśāli dynasty to which Tṛṇabindu belonged, had matrimonial alliance with the Pulastya dynasty of which the great Rākṣasa king Rāvaṇa of Ceylon was fourth in descent from Pulastya. Considering the detailed early history of the Vaiśāla dynasty as narrated in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* which carries the story of its rule to the end of the reign of Dama (ch. 132), it seems that the early kings of this dynasty had to encounter often with southern kings, and the great Marutta had to attack the Nāgas once, against the wish of his father Avikṣit.[1] Connecting these incidents with the matrimonial alliance entered by Tṛṇabindu with king Pulastya, it can be inferred that social and political relations were the order of the day between the ruling families of North India and South India. From the fact that Draviḍā is one of the names assigned to the daughter of Tṛṇabindu, it can be conjectured that Tṛṇabindu's wife was a lady of the Draviḍā country, and the daughter born to them was naturally married to Pulastya who was apparently one of the rulers of Draviḍā-déśa. The genius of Hindu culture lay in accommodating and harmonising, and therefore when such relationships became an established fact, an Āryan origin of the Pulastya dynasty was apparently invented. Rāvaṇa, according to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, was one well versed in the Vedas and their Aṅgas. The Rākṣasas were either an indigenous South Indian tribe like the Nāgas or were degraded Āryans who have fallen from the path of dharma and who had permanently settled in South India and Ceylon. The latter theory gains some support from the fact that the Rākṣasa clans are said to be seven in number and they are as follows: Yātudhānas, Brahmadhānas, Vārtas, Paulastyas, Nairtas, Agastyas, and Kauśikas.[2] The names warrant the assumption that the Āryas like Agastya, Kauśika, Pulastya settled in South India, for what reason we do not know, and became the progenitors, each in his turn, of a clan of Rākṣasas.

Coming back to the episode of Tṛṇabindu, we find a contemporaneity of Agastya and Tṛṇabindu or Tṛṇadhūmāgni as given in the Tamil tradition.

Agastya had married a sister of Pulastya, and Pulastya was the son-in-law of Tṛṇabindu. The latter had probably an occasion to visit the court of his son-in-law and found Agastya settled in Draviḍa having become an authority of Tamil language. Probably, as most ancient monarchs did, Tṛṇabindu anointed his son Viśāla on the throne and sat at the feet of the old Agastya to learn the beauties of the Tamil language and literature. This is not unnatural as we have

[1] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, ch. 129-131.
[2] *Ibid.*, ch. 70, 55-6.

a similar example of it in the Śangam literature. There once came to the court of Madura a northern king Pirakattan or Brahmadatta by name. Kapilar, the great Śangam poet noticed in him lack of regard for Tamil poetry. Consequently he sang to him the poem *Kuriñjippāṭṭu* after which Pirakattan became a devoted student of Tamil so much so that he became the author of a grammatical treatise. These mythical accounts give the indication to us that they corroborate to a certain degree ancient tradition of the Tamil land. It would appear that these mythical personages became hidden by the mass of obscure tradition and were once again made living personalities when historical persons bearing almost similar names played a glorious part in enriching the Tamil literature and in perhaps carrying their culture to the Far East. Tolkāppiyanār, as I have said elsewhere[1] and his master Agattiyaṇār, probably a historical figure, were contemporaries and could not have lived earlier than the fourth century B. C.

SECTION VIII

MUSIC, SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

Among the fine arts Ancient India was able to develop, music and dancing claim a large share. Painting and other allied arts are later growths. It has been realised, as is explained clearly in the *Viṣṇu Dharmottara Purāṇa*,—generally regarded as a supplement to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,—that one is dependent on the other. First music, next dancing and then painting are regarded as the process of evolution of the art of painting. Without music dancing cannot exist, and the rules of the art of dancing imply those of the art of painting.[2] We have evidence to indicate that painting was practised in ancient times on a large scale. The *Jātaka* tales speak of portrait sculpture as well as picture galleries.[3] According to Vātsyāyana the painting requisites such as the drawing-board, brushes etc., were in the possession of every citizen, thereby implying that every cultured man was an artist by himself.[4] These references unmistakably bear out that long before the epoch of the *Jātakas* and that of the *Kāmaṣūtra*, the arts of music and dancing were in a developed condition. But this development could not be that which witnessed the composition of the *Bharatanāṭya Śāstra*, where perhaps a systematic treatment of these arts was attempted for the first time so far as their secular side was concerned. *Gānam* is the technical

[1] *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, p. 21.
[2] Pt. III, ch. 2. 5, 6 : See also the *Viṣṇudharmottara* by Stella Kramrisch, Cal. Univ. 1928, p. 31.
[3] *Jātakas*, Vol. VI, pp. 159, 212 and 223.
[4] *Kāmaṣūtra*, pp. 43–51, sūtras 5–13.

term to denote secular music, while *Gāndhārvam* is the expression for divine music.[1] The arts of music and musical compositions are as old as the Vedic times. In fact, the *Sāma Veda* is said to be a musical rendering of the *Rig Veda*. Out of the orthodox school represented by the *Nāradīya śikṣa*, there developed the secular school which catered to the society at large.

In the light of the above remarks we can proceed to an examination of the musical chapters in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. The latter half of chapter (86) deals with Gāndharvam and the whole of the succeeding chapter is a treatise on the *Gītālaṅkāra nirdeśa* or determination of the characteristics of a musical composition. Taking the first chapter, we find that the rules which are laid down are a mingling of both the schools, orthodox and secular. The *Purāṇa* does not mention either the famous author Bharata or his treatise. We have therefore to credit these portions of the *Purāṇa* as materials of an earlier epoch, earlier than *Bharatanāṭya Śāstra*. It may be noted in passing that in some respects the injunctions agree with those of the *Nāradīya śikṣa*. The texts are usually corrupt and need careful editing. In reviewing the matter contained therein we meet with a technical term *svaramaṇḍalam*. This is constituted by seven *svaras* (notes), three *grāmas*[2] (scales), twenty-one *mūrchanas* (rise and fall of tones), and forty-nine *tānas* (grouping of notes). Analysing these further, every *grāma* has seven *mūrchanas*. The names of these *grāmas* are *madhyama grāma*, *ṣadjagrāma* and *gāndhāragrāma*. The seven *mūrchanas* of the *madhyamagrāma* are as follows :

(1) Sauvīrī	(Probably Sāveri).	
(2) Harinaśva	Presiding deity, Indra.	
(3) Kalopanata	Do.	Maruts.
(4) Śuddhamadhyama	Do.	Gandharvas.
(5) Śārṅgi (also Mārgi)	Do.	Mṛgendra.
(6) Pāvani (also Pauravi)		
(7) Dṛṣṭaka (Hṛṣyaka)	Presiding deity, Nāgas.	

Of these, the second is said to be peculiar for the Hari country and the fourth to Marudeśa or desert regions. The *mūrchanas* of *ṣaḍjagrāma* are also seven but mention is only made of four. It is not possible to guess why the last three are omitted. The four are :

(1) Uttaramandra	Presiding deities, Brahmā and Dhruva.	
(2) Janani (Rājani)		
(3) Uttarāyatā	Presiding deities, Brahmā and Pitṛis.	
(4) Śuddha ṣaḍja	Do.	Agni.

[1] cp. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar : *Svaramelakalānidhi*, Intro. pp. lxxii–lxxiii (Annamalai University, 1932).

[2] The *Paṇ* and *Pālai* of Tamil literature can be equated with *mūrchana* and *grāma*.

Under the categorical list belonging to the *Gāndhāragrāma* occur ten *mūrchanas* instead of seven. Apart from seven, the remaining three *mūrchanas* are to be taken as belonging to the *ṣaḍjagrāma* where we noticed an omission.

This is another piece of evidence to show that the original Purāṇa has been tampered with. The ten *mūrchanas* mentioned are:

(1) Agniṣṭoma.
(2) Vājapeyā.
(3) Pauṇḍarīka.
(4) Aśvamedha.
(5) Rājasūya.
(6) Cakrasuvarṇaka.
(7) Gosavam.
(8) Mahāvṛṣtikam.
(9) Brahmādānam.
(10) Prājāpatyam.

Among other constituents of the *svaramaṇḍalam* mention was made of the forty-nine *tānas*. While later works on musical science recognise 28 *tānas* to *ṣaḍjagrāma* and 21 *tānas* to *madhyamagrāma*, the *Vāyu Purāṇa* distributes them among the three *grāmas* as follows:

20	*tānas* for	*madhyama grāma*
14	,,	*ṣaḍjagrāma*
15	,,	*gāndhāragrāma*
—		
49	Total	
—		

It is significant to note that the *Gāndhāragrāma* or divine music became lost in course of time. Again the names of the *tānas* which are given in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* are different from those found in extant music works. The matter contained in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* is certainly old, older than any regular treatise on the subject of music. It is not necessary here to give the names of these forty-nine *tānas* as found in the Purāṇa and other later works.

In the chapter entitled *Gītālaṅkāra nirdeśa*, much valuable matter is scattered and affords food for a student of ancient Indian music. As has been already remarked the compiler of the Purāṇa does not mention the name of the authority on which he has based his theory of music. Neither does he claim it as his own; because he uses the phrase '*pūrvācārya matam budhva.*' In this respect he has followed the ancient teachers on music. In musical composition the following are to be taken into account: *alaṁkāra* (grouping of notes), *varṇa* (method of pronouncing notes), *padas*, (a priori and a posteriori), *sthānas* (the places from where the notes originate) and *pravicāra* (movements). It is said that the *Alaṁkāras* are thirty in number and

these should follow *varṇas*. This will enable one to fix the *rāgam* or musical modes. The *sthānas* are three and are *udara* (belly), *kaṇṭha* (neck) and *śiras* (head). The *varṇaṣ* are four—*sthāyi*, *prasañjā-cari*, *avarohaṇam*, and *ārohaṇam*. For the accomplishment of *Lakṣaṇa* there are 103 kinds of what are known as *varṇikas* which take their origin from both nose and mouth. The importance of *Alaṁkāra* is shown in the attainment of *Saṃsthānam* (form), *Pramānam* (measure), *Vikāram* (modification) and *lakṣaṇam* (definition). The relation of *varṇa* to *alaṁkāra* is comparable to the adornment of different jewels by a woman.

Without entering into further details, we shall take up for examination one or two terms which afford general interest. There is an interesting term *bahirgītam* which is said to be *pañcadaivatam*. This implies a scenic performance on the stage. *Bahirgītam* is the song sung in front of the stage before the regular dramatic performance begins. It is to be regretted that no details of the stage and actions relating to it are furnished by the Purāṇa.

The concluding section of the chapter throws some light on the different kinds of dancing in vogue. Very few details are there connected with the technique of the art of dancing. There is a very corrupted stanza which, if reconstructed in the light of the texts of the *Yāgñāvalkyasmṛti*,[1] would supply important data with regard to ancient musical pieces connected with dancing. The stanza runs as follows:

द्वे चापरान्तिके विद्याद्द्वयशुल्लाष्टकस्य तु
प्राकृते वैणवैश्चैव गान्धारांशे प्रयुज्यते ॥ ch. 87.34.

As reconstructed :[1]

द्वेपराचान्तिके विद्यादयं उल्लोभ्यकस्यतु
प्राकृते वैणवैश्चैव गान्धारांशे प्रयुज्यते ॥

Among the musical pieces recommended to the ascetics as enabling them to attain *mokṣa* or salvation by Yājñavalkya, some find mention in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*.

[1] Cp. *Yājna.* III, st. 113 and 114.

अपरान्तकमुल्लोभ्यं मद्रकं प्रकरीं तथा ।
औवेणकं सरोबिन्दुमुत्तरं गीतकानि च ॥
ऋग्गाथा पाणिका दक्षविहिता ब्रह्मगीतिका ।
गेयमेतत्तदभ्यासकरणान्मोक्षसंज्ञितम् ॥

The Purāṇa refers to the dance *Kaiśikam* of which seven varieties are distinguished. *Uttaram* and *Upohanam* are again musical pieces related to dancing. *Yānam* is another kind of dance. In this connection our attention is drawn to another technical term called *vṛtti* which occurs here wrongly as *buddhi*. (*Ibid.* st. 43.) It determines the disposition of the mind as to the mode of singing. There are three kinds—*vārtika*, *dakṣiṇa*, and *samavāya*, determined by two *mātras*, four *mātras*, and eight *mātras* respectively. All these *vṛttis* are used in the *suvira mūrchana*.

We began this section with the statement that painting and probably sculpture are the results of music and dancing. On this very interesting subject the Purāṇa gives nothing by way of information. Incidental references to portrait sculpture and painting are made in one or two places. These lead us to infer that the Purāṇa is aware of the art which was largely in use in the temples dedicated to gods. In the language of philosophy the Purāṇa calls the whole universe a *citra* (picture) as if painted on a wall (*bhittāvivārpitam*) by the mythical artist (*Citrakārani*) who is given the appellation of *Maya*.[1] Bereft of its philosophical aspect, it conveys to us the idea of a picture being painted on a wall by an artist. More interesting is the other reference where mention is made of portrait sculptures. In the temple dedicated to Śiva there were portraits sculptured in the great pillars, of gods and animals which beautified the whole buildings.[2] In the representation of human figures and animal figures as well in sculpture, the Purāṇa aims at lifelike pictures exhibiting sensuous passions. The animals carved here are lions in thousands and the carving of lions is said to be invariably difficult. Both the gods and the lions sculptured are representations of Indian mythology and hence monstrous, and incongruous. Here is a description of the gods of the quarters. They are excellent in form, wearing *cūḍāmaṇi* on their head, attired in clothes resembling the hue of the clouds, lustrous, full of prowess, with a white garland, seeming to roar, and wielding *vajra* and *śūla* in their hands. The lions are again represented as being linked one with the other from pillar to pillar by a chain, and as living in comfort.[3]

[1] Ch. 104, 41. [2] Ch. 101, 289-291.

[3] मन्दराद्रिप्रकाशानां बलेनाप्रतिमौजसाम्
हारकुन्देन्दुवर्णानां विद्युत्घन निनादिनाम् ॥
चूडामणिधराणां वै मेघसंनिभवाससाम्
श्रीवत्साङ्कितवज्राणामङ्कुशीशूलपाणिनाम् ॥

Thus we see that music, dancing and sculpture which are secular arts have been intimately connected with the national religion of the land. For as a great historian has remarked it is mythological poetry that has been the foundation of all national religions both in the East and in the West.

SECTION IX

ASTRONOMICAL AND OTHER DATA

H. H. Wilson depending on Bentley's researches on ancient Hindu astronomy referred to two significant statements in the Purāṇa which supply some chronological clue from an astronomical standpoint. One is the length of a Yuga which is reckoned to be one of five years' duration and of which we shall speak presently, and the second is the date of the commencement of the solar year. It is said that this cycle commences when the Sun is in the Śravaṇa, i.e. when Śravaṇa happens to be the first of the Nakṣatras and Māgha the first of the months. These two are propositions which do not conform to the accepted standards. The Yuga of five years is to be traced back to what is known as the first period of Hindu astronomy, roughly between 1181–961 B.C. The mode of computation with regard to the solar year is possible only in the age between 204 B.C. and 44 A.D. It is further significant to note that this mode of reckoning the solar year was abandoned after 538 A.D.

The above statements must either take us to a period between 1181 and 961 B.C. or 204 B.C. and 44 A.D. The compilation of the Purāṇa could not be so early as the first though it may contain such old material. The more reasonable date will be the latter, i.e. somewhere between 204 B.C. and 44 A.D. But taking into consideration other circumstances, the date of the compilation may be pushed back to two or three centuries. It may be, however, pointed out that some portions of the Purāṇa were added at the period between B.C. 204 and 44 A.D., and some more during the Gupta epoch as we shall presently see.

Besides these there are many details of astronomical interest, so much so that the Purāṇa is an invaluable treatise on ancient astronomy.

एवं दिशानां देवानां रूपणोत्तमशालिनाम्
तस्य प्रासादमुख्यस्य स्तम्भेषूत्तमशोभिषु ॥
संयताग्नि मयीभिस्तु शृङ्खलाभिः पृथक्पृथक् ।
मायासहस्रं सिंहानां सुखं तत्र निवासिनाम् ॥
स्तम्भेऽप्यपासृताषष्टं त्रयम्बकस्य निवेशने ।

We have details regarding the various planets, stars and the milky path in respect of their size and locale, their cars and steeds.[1] The interrelation between the Pole or the Dhruva and these, is further treated as being attached to it by ropes of air.[2] The role played by this Dhruva in the various planetary *maṇḍalas* or orbits is something unique and incomprehensible. It is said every movement and every action are to be traced to this.[3] On it depends the rainfall also.[4]

Other interesting details of an astronomical character are that Māgha is the first of months and that Śraviṣṭa is the first of Nakṣatras.[5] While we are familiar with Uttarāyaṇam and Dakṣiṇāyanam commencing with Puṣyam (Tamil, *Tai*) and Āṣāḍha or (Tamil, *Ādi*) months the Purāṇa rules that the months of *Tapa*(next to Puṣyam and Nabha (next to Āṣāḍha) (*Māśi* and *Āvani* of Tamil) commence the two *ayanams* respectively.[6] Again in the account of the planets (*grahas*) though all the nine are mentioned by name, still only seven are treated as if they are orthodox *grahas*. The two that have been left as unorthodox are *kētu* and *rāhu* and tradition has it that these two are of āsuraic nature. Among the seven again a distinction is made as *mandavicāriṇaḥ* (slow-moving ones) and *śīgragāḥ* (quick-moving ones). To the first category belong the Saura (Saturn), Aṇgiras (Bṛhaspati) and Vakra (Śanaiścara). To the second category belong the four big *grahas* Sūrya, Candra, Budha, and Śukra.[7] It may be pointed out here that Varāhamihira, the reputed astronomer, who lived at the commencement of the sixth century A.D., continues this tradition, but after him the *navagraha* theory came to stay.

There is a wealth of material on astronomical and astrological modes and methods. In fact the Purāṇa itself says that they are so much that they defy all knowledge and erudition. It states that one must get acquainted with the theory and then put it into practice. By observation one must draw one's own inference. But in recommending this mode of study of the subject, the Purāṇa speaks of five means which would render the approach to it easy. These are cakṣu (eyes), śāstram (science), jalam (water), lekhyam (written document) and gaṇitam (calculation).[8] But the Purāṇa is in correspondence with the injunctions of the *Dharmaśāstra* when it condemns those who embrace astrology as their profession. It is said that these find a place only in hell.

नक्षत्रैर्जीवते यश्च नरोगच्छत्यधोमुखम् ।

[1] Chap. 50–53.
[2] Chap. 51–9.
[3] Chap. 51, 6–11.
[4] *Ibid.*, 52; Chap. 52, 90–99.
[5] 53–112–3.
[6] Chap. 50, 201.
[7] Chap. 53, 71–72.
[8] Chap. 53, 121–3.

The *Arthaśāstra* denounces the person who consults the stars too much.[1]

But these are common details which are ordinary and do not break new ground in respect of chronology.

ON TIME

The Purāṇa contains an ancient account on the division of time. There are several chapters [2] where a reference is made to *Saṅkhya* and *Saṅkhyavid* or expert in calculations. The division of time begins with the smallest unit *nimeṣā* [3] and goes to that which is beyond reckoning. Though we are apt to regard the mode of computation crude, still it proves to demonstrate the genius of the Hindus in mathematical science. The Purāṇa bears ample testimony to this. Among the various terms, the word *yuga* is of special import. Besides mention of the ordinary four *yugas* and their characteristics [4] and a measure equal to Dhanur daṇḍa [5] we have the *yugam of Ravi* (ch. 50, 184) and the *Saptarṣi yugam*.[6] But what is more important here is the yugam of five years (*vatsaras*).[7] These five years are Samvatsara, Parivatsara, Idvatsara, Anuvatsara and Vatsara. Their presiding deities are the fire, the sun, the moon, the wind, and Rudra respectively.[8] It is said that this cycle happens with Śraviṣṭha and ends with Śravaṇa, both lunar asterisms, and it revolves like a wheel according to the movement of the Sun :

'śravaṇāntam sraviṣṭhādi yugam syāt pañcavārṣikam |
bhānorgati-viśeṣena cakravatparivartate || 53, 116.

In this connection, mention may be made of a statement in the Purāṇa that a Saṃvatsara or a year is reckoned to be of five parts :

यश्चैव पञ्चधात्मा वैप्रोक्तः संवत्सरो द्विजैः ॥

In this and in the following statement that the sons of the *Ṛtus* are called *ārtavas* and are five in number, the Purāṇa re-states the Vedic idea of the seasons. According to the *Kṛṣṇa yajus Saṃhitā* (*Kaṇḍa* VI, I *Praśna* II and 11th *Anuvāka*) and the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*,[9] there are only five *prayājas* recognised. The *Prayājas* is only a Vedic term for the *Ṛtus*. The Vedic calendar which knows the six Ṛtus or seasons makes the *Hemanta* and *Śiśira Ṛtus* as constituting one *Ṛtu*.

A word in this connection may be said about the concept of Brahmā's day and night and that of the *Manvantaras*. While the

[1] Ch. ix, 4.
[2] Ch. 31, 24 f ; Ch. 50 esp. 169 ; 101. 93 ff.
[3] Ch. 53, 115.
[4] Ch. 7, 22 ; 23, 83 ; 31, 21.
[5] Ch. 101, 125.
[6] Ch. 99, 419.
[7] Ch. 31, 28 ; 50, 183, etc.
[8] Ch. 56, 20–21.
[9] Anand series, p. 722.

period of the creation is said to be Brahmā's day, the period of deluge is his night. The following table is given :

	1000 Kalpas	=1 Abda (of Brahmā).
	8000 Abdas	=1 Yuga.
	1000 Yugas	=1 Savana.
	6000 Savanas	=1 Life of Brahmā.
Crore ×	1000 Crores	=1 Parārdha.
	2 Parārdhas	=1 Param.

In this connection the Purāṇa makes a remarkable statement that there is neither day nor night for Brahmā. It is *upacāra* (complimentary) and is intended for the sake of the welfare of the world.

We can now proceed to an examination of the *manvantarams*. A *manvantaram* rests on the saptarṣis, devas, pitris, manus, and prajas. These are created at the beginning of the Creation and destroyed at the commencement of the Dissolution. The devas are sons of ṛṣis and ṛṣis are also sons of the devas. Pitris are also sons of devas. The fourteen *manvantarams* are represented by respective Manus who represent again the fourteen faces of Brahmā which are said to be fourteen vowels. The term Manu stands for resolution as the term Dakṣa for prāṇa or life. This is what we may term to be the philosophical explanation of the *manvantaras*.

SECTION X

Genuine Historical Tradition

That myth has been mixed up with genuine history in the Purāṇas as a whole, goes without saying. In spite of that curious mixture of facts and fiction, ceaseless investigation calls attention to certain features of genuine history. It must be remarked at the outset that whatever is spoken of as belonging to the kingdom of gods is legendary, and notwithstanding the elaborate genealogies it would be waste of time to go into a searching examination of mythical personages and their descendants. But the sections dealing with the *vaṃśa* or genealogy of ṛṣis and kṣatriya kings are worth investigating by a student of traditional history. The following is a categorical list of the sages whose genealogies are given to some extent in the *Vāyu Purāṇa* : Aṅgirasa, Vasiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, Bhṛgu, Atri, Kaṇvā, Viśvāmitra, Agastya, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu. Of these the *vaṃśas* of the last four are not furnished. Even that of Viśvāmitra is meagre.[1] The *vaṃśā* of Pulastya is connected with the royal line of Vaiśāli of which Marutta Cakravarti was an honoured

[1] Ch. 91, 96-102.

monarch.[1] Even with regard to the genealogy of Atri[2] and Kaṇvā,[3] there is only a bare outline. Leaving out of our account the mythical Atri, Prabhākara can be claimed as a historical person.[4] It is said that he married the ten daughters of Bhadrāśva and Ghṛtāci. Dattātreya [5] is a semi-legendary figure and he is looked upon as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.[6] The Ātreyas are mentioned as hymn-makers.[7]

With regard to the Kaṇva *vaṃśā*, two different origins are furnished in the Purāṇa. The earlier origin traces the genealogy from Medhātithi, a son of Kaṇvā.[8] The later origin ascribes the beginning of the *vaṃśa* from Ajāmiḍha.[9] It is significant to note that the Purāṇa misreads Kaṇvā and Kāṇvāyaṇa as Kaṇṭha and Kāṇṭhāyaṇa. Both accounts agree that Kaṇvā had a son Medhātithi to whom the Kāṇvāyanas trace their descent. The difficulty lies in the fact that in one place Kaṇvā is the son of Apratiratha, a son of king Matinara, and in another place a son of Ajāmiḍha, a king who was Matinara's successor by some 32 generations,[10] thus indicating a great discrepancy in time.

The genealogies of Aṅgirasa, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Kaśyapa are given in detail.[11] The Āṅgirasas claim their descent from Atharvan Aṅgiras who is apparently a mythical figure.[12] A number of distinguished sages figure in this line. Some of them are Bharadvāja, Dīrghatamas, Vāmadeva and Śaradvant. A sage of the line is mentioned Ayapya[13] and the same is corruptly named Ajasya in the *Matsya Purāṇa*.[14] The correct reading, as pointed out by Pargiter, seems to be Ayasa. Bharadvāja is the son of Bṛhaspati, the Purohita of gods. Another name of Dīrghatamas is Gautama.[15] Śaradvant is the paternal cousin of this Dīrghatamas.[16] We have again a Śaradvant who is the son of a Gautama whose line is given in the North Pāñcala dynasty.[17] In all, thirty-three important personages are mentioned, all of them being hymn-makers.[18]

The genealogy of Vasiṣṭha next claims our attention.[19] The *vaṃśa* of this seer is rather difficult to work up. We meet with Āpava Vasiṣṭha, son of Varuṇa. Arjunakārtavīrya got his

1 Ch. 70, st. 29–56.
2 Ch. 70, 67–78.
3 Ch. 99.
4 Ch. 99, 123–27.
5 Ch. 94, 10–11.
6 Ch. 98, 89.
7 Ch. 59, 104.
8 Ch. 99, 130–1.
9 Ch. 99, 169–70. (Cp. *Matsya P.*, Ch. 49, 46–7 and Ch. 50–5).
10 See Pargiter, *An. His. Trad.*, p. 225.
11 For the genealogy of the Āṅgirasas see Ch. 65, 97–108.
12 Cp. *Matsya*. Ch. 196.
13 Ch. 59, 101.
14 Ch. 196, 4.
15 Ch. 99, 47–61 and 88–92.
16 *Ibid.*, 48 and 57–62.
17 Ch. 99, 201-5.
18 *Ibid.*, 102.
19 For the genealogy of the Vāsiṣṭhas see Ch. 70, sl. 79-90.

hermitage burnt down and was consequently cursed.[1] In one place Vasiṣtha and Arundhatī were the parents of a hundred sons, of whom Śakti was the eldest.[2] Vasu or Vasumān is said to be a son of Vasiṣṭha and is one of the seven sages in heaven.[3] Aśmaka is said to be the son of Vasiṣṭha by appointment by the queen of Kalmāṣapāda to continue Ikṣvāku's line.[4] Another Vasiṣṭha is mentioned as a contemporary of Nemi, king of Videha. This king became Videha (bodiless) on account of the sage's curse.[5] Vasiṣṭha again appears as a contemporary and Purohita of Ikṣvāku, the celebrated king of Ayodhyā. Under orders from Vasiṣṭha, Ikṣvāku banished his son Vikukṣi, for having taken unclean meat in a śrāddha.[6] We have Vasiṣṭha as Purohita of Daśaratha and his son Rāma, according to the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It cannot be that the same Vasiṣṭha continued to live for ages together. The truth seems to be that there were a number of persons who apparently belonged to the family of the mythical sage Vasiṣṭha.

Turning our attention next to the *vaṃśa* of the Bhārgavas, there is as usual the confusion arising from the fact that genuine tradition is mixed up with myth.[7] Bhṛgu Prajāpati is the progenitor of this line. His son is Uśanas Śukra who is identified with the planet Venus. Śukra is the Purohita of the Asuras.[8] Elsewhere he is claimed as the son of Umā and Śiva.[9] Other seers of this line are Cyavana[10] and his son Ātmavāna or Ātmavant who[11] is mentioned as a hymn-maker among eighteen others. He is probably Apanavāna of the *Ṛgveda*. Other names of this *vaṃśa* are Ṛcika, Gṛta-Samada, Pṛthu, and Mārkaṇḍeya.

The last important Brahman family is that of Kaśyapa.[12] It is said that the Progenitor Kaśyapa had two sons Vatsāra and Asita. Vatsāra had in his turn two sons Nidhruva and Raibhya. While the latter was progenitor of the Raibhyas, the former was that of the Kuṇḍapāyins. The genealogy further shows that Asita's son was Devala connected with the Śāṇḍilyas. We hear of these in the reign of Dilīpa Khaṭvāṅga, King of Ayodhyā.[13] Thus Raibhyas, Śāṇḍilyas, and Nidhruvas or Kuṇḍapāyins come under the category of Kaśyapas. Kaśyapa, Vatsāra (also Vatsara), Vibhrama, Raibhya, Asita and Devala are all said to be Brahmavādins.[14]

[1] Ch. 94, sl. 40, 45.
[2] Ch. 2, 10.
[3] Ch. 64, 27.
[4] Ch. 88, 177.
[5] Ch. 89, 4.
[6] Ch. 88, 12-20.
[7] See *Vāyu P.*, Ch. 65, 72-96; Cp. *Matsya* 195, 11-46 and *Brahma* III. 1. 73. 100.
[8] Ch. 62, 80 : 97, 94, etc.
[9] Ch. 72, 15.
[10] Ch. 86, 1-2 and 23.
[11] Ch. 59, 96.
[12] For genealogy see *Vāyu P.*, Ch. 70, 24-29.
[13] Ch. 73, 41-2.
[14] Ch. 59, 103.

More important for historical purposes are the Kṣatriya genealogies, or broadly, genealogies of different ruling dynasties. All these are derived from the primeval Manu Vaivasvata, son of the Sun God. According to the version of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* Manu had nine sons and a daughter Ilā. Purūravas was born to her by Budha. Then she was turned into a man by name Sudyumna.[1] He had three sons Utkala, Gayā and Vinatāśva who got three kingdoms respectively.[2] The nine sons of Manu were Ikṣvāku, Nahuṣa, Dhṛṣṭa, Saryāti, Nariṣyanta, Prāṁśu, Nabhagoriṣṭa, Karūṣa and Pṛṣadhra.[3] The eldest Ikṣvāku was the progenitor of the solar race which ruled from Ayodhyā. He had a hundred sons of whom Vikukṣi was the eldest and successor. Of the other sons, 50 were entrusted with small states in the north and 48 in the south (Dakṣiṇāpatha).[4] Vikukṣi was succeeded by Kakutstha. The two remaining sons of Ikṣvāku were Nimi (also Nemi) and Daṇḍa. Nemi in his turn became the progenitor of a separate dynasty with its capital at Videha. This line is to be traced from his son Mithi, and hence the country of Mithilā. He was also called Janaka, and must be distinguished from Śirādhvaja Janaka, the father of Śītā and father-in-law of Rāma.[5] Daṇḍa was the other son of Ikṣvāku who was in charge of the region which came to be known as the Daṇḍaka.[6]

Passing on to the other sons of Manu, nothing is known about Nahuṣa. Pargiter substitutes Nabhaga for Nahuṣa. Dhārṣṭakas sprang from Dhṛṣṭa,[7] Kārūṣas from Kāruṣa[8] and Śaryātas from Śaryāti.[9] Nariṣyanta and Prāṃśu are of the Vaiśāla dynasty[10] as also Nābhāgoriṣṭa. Pargiter substitutes Nabhanediṣṭha.[11] Pṛṣadhra[12] was cursed for having killed his teacher's cow.

We have then the glowing history of the Aila line which had its capital at Pratiṣṭhāna. While Āyu succeeded Aila, a brother of his, Amāvasu established himself at Kanyākubja (Kanuj). Kṣatravṛddha, a son of Āyu, founded the kingdom of Kāśi (Benares). Under Yayāti the kingdom grew into an empire and four of his sons were appointed over the conquered territories, the fifth Pūru succeeding him. The Haihayas and Yādavas are offshoots of the line of Yadu, son of Yayāti occupying the southern and the northern half of the original kingdom. When the power of the Pauravas began to decline, the Yādava king Śaśabindu made headway into their territory.

1 See the whole of ch. 85.
2 Ch. 99, 266.
3 Ch. 85–4.
4 Ch. 88, 8 ff.
5 For details, see the whole of Ch. 89.
6 Cp. *Rāma* VII 81, 18–19.
7 Ch. 88, 4–5.
8 Ch. 86, 2–3.
9 *Ibid.*, 23-9.
10 *Ibid.*, 12.
11 *Ibid.*, 3, 22.
12 *Ibid.* 1, 2.

The next important king of this traditional history is Māndhātṛ. He was a great conqueror and brought under his sway the kingdoms of Kanyākubjas, of Druhyus, and also of Ānavas. The progenitors of the Druhyus and Ānavas are Drahyu and Anu, sons of Yayāti. A Druhyu king Aruddha was killed by Māndhātṛ and his successor Gāndhāra was confined to the north-western province, the then Gāndhāra country.[1] Mucukunda a son of Māndhātṛ built Māhīṣmatī which soon took the place of Ayodhyā in political importance.

The following are other important dynasties which were more or less branches of the existing stocks. Mention was already made of the kingdom of Kanyākubja. One of its earlier kings was Jahnu about whom legends are narrated. Under him it attained some prominence.[2] The next important king is Amṛtarayas who is said to have founded the Magadha.[3] Secondly were Tālajaṅghas who were Haihayas whom Sagara defeated and extended his empire.[4] Coming to Ayodhyā we find some of its great kings were Dilīpa, Raghu and Daśaratha. The reign of Rāma, the son of Daśaratha gives us a peep into the ancient history of the Dekhan. The other sons of Daśaratha and their sons are mentioned with their respective kingdoms to which they were appointed.[5] With them the traditional history of the Ayodhyā kings ends.

The history of the Vaiśāli dynasty is given in two places and much of it is corrupt. A good account of the early history of this dynasty is furnished by the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* to which a reference has been made before.[6] The Ānava kingdom became split into five, of which Aṅga was one. Others were Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Puṇḍra, and Brahma. Their capital was Mālinī which became Campāvati or Campā under the rule of a member of this line, by name Campā. The dynasty of the Aṅgas came to an end practically with Karṇa.[7] Then the genealogy of Pūru is given commencing with his son Janamejaya.[8] Duṣyanta's son Bharata is a member of this line. Another descendant of this stock, Hasti, founded the city of Hastināpuram. A branch of this stock came to be known as the Nīpas who reigned from Kampilya. The dynasty which is now known as south Pāñcala dynasty came to an end with Ballāla's son.[9]

Passing on to the history of the Kurus, from Janamejaya, son of Parikṣit, the account is continued to the reign of Adhisīmakṛṣṇa when the Purāṇa is said to have been narrated.[10] From this medley of traditional history of the lunar and solar races the Purāṇa takes

1 Ch. 99, 7-9.
2 Ch. 91, 54-8.
3 *Ibid.*, 62.
4 Ch. 88, 167-9.
5 Ch. 88, 87-190
6 See above p. 60.
7 pp. 67-119.
8 *Vāyu P.* 170-73
9 *Ibid.*, 174-182.
10 *Ibid.*, 229-259.

us to the 'future' and begins to narrate the story of other ruling dynasties in a prophetic tone. These Pargiter calls the dynasties of the Kali Age.

The following is a categorical list of other ruling dynasties mentioned in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*. (1) The Pauravas from Adhisīmakṛṣṇā to Kṣemaka were twenty-five in number.[1] (2) The Aikṣvāku dynasty begins with Bṛhadratha and ends with Sumitra[2] consisting altogether of 31 kings. (3) The Māgadheyas commence with Somādhi who ruled at Girivraja, and ends with Ariñjaya. The reigning members of this dynasty were thirty-two and the duration of their respective reigns is also given.[3] Then the Pradyotas, the Śiśunāgas, the Nandas, the Mauryas, the Śuṅgas, the Kaṇvas (wrongly mentioned as Kaṇṭāyanas), and the Āndhras, and the Guptas are given,[4] followed by Śakas and other foreign and indigenous tribes which the Purāṇa styles as *mlecchas*. Some of these are mentioned by name: Ābhīras, Gardabhins, Yavanas, Tuṣāras, Maruṇḍas, Maunas, Vṛṣalas, Vaideśikas, Vāhnikas, Meghas, Naiṣadhas, and Nāgas.[5] Contemporaneous with the Gupta rule is mentioned the rule of Manidhanamjaya, Devarakṣita, Guha, and Kanaka. A description of the country at the commencement of the Gupta epoch is then furnished. Such condition is supposed to be that of the Kali era.

SECTION XI

Date of the Purāṇa

It will be interesting to turn our attention to fixing the probable date of the composition of the Purāṇa and see how far our study of the Purāṇa enables us to arrive at some definite conclusion. As has been already remarked, while some portions of the Purāṇa can go back to the 5th century B. C., other portions must have been added or revised at the end of the third or fourth centuries of the Christian era. The data furnished in the preceding pages and especially the section entitled *Religion and Philosophy of the Purāṇa* may lead us to postulate the theory that the Purāṇa may find a place among the earliest of the existing Purāṇas. In examining the date of the composition we have briefly to recall some statements already made.

1. The Purāṇa is the typical representative of the transformation from the old *Yoga* school to the *Advaita* school incorporating into it the salient features of both the *Yoga* and the *Sāṅkhya*. This metamorphosis took place, to

[1] Ch. 99, 270–282.
[2] *Ibid.*, 280–92.
[3] *Ibid.*, 296–308.
[4] *Ibid.*, 309–361.
[5] *Ibid.*, 362–395.

venture a conjecture, in the period of the *Upaniṣads* which may be dated roughly the 5th and the 4th centuries B. C. It may be noted in passing that the *Vāyu Purāṇa* does not preach exclusive worship of a particular deity.

2. The Purāṇa is an ardent advocate of the ancient *Yoga* theory inasmuch as its injunctions regarding the practice of *Yoga* can be traced back to the chalcolithic period of Indian History as evidenced by 'the *yatis* of the proto-historic and prehistoric Indus Valley' in sculptures.
3. The Purāṇa nowhere makes even an allusion to the religious sects Buddhism and Jainism which came to stay in the fourth century B.C., if not earlier.
4. The Purāṇa prescribes feeding of *Yogis* and ascetics for the *śrāddha* which has long fallen into disuse. The fact that the Purāṇa is full of it bears ample testimony to its antiquity.
5. In its recommendation of particular kinds of dancing accompanied by music to the ascetics as a means of attaining salvation, the Purāṇa is on a par with the *Yājñavalkya smṛiti* where similar prescriptions are found.[1] The late Gaṇapati Śāstri has justification to assign the law-book of Yājñavalkya to an epoch earlier than the *Kauṭalīya* for which the generally accepted date is the fourth century B. C.
6. The epic *Mahābhārata* and its supplement the *Harivaṁśa* definitely quote a *Vāyu Purāṇa*. The epic knows the existence of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* in an independent form.[2] This shows that the Purāṇa is much anterior to the didactic epic.
7. The artificial style of the Purāṇa recalls the language of the plays of the famous dramatist Bhāsa. The discoverer and editor of these plays assigned, on substantial grounds, fifth century B. C. for Bhāsa, which still holds the field, notwithstanding the controversy that has raged about it. The common feature of the plays and of the Purāṇa is the use of a large number of archaic (*ārṣa*) words such as paśyate, paśyeta, gṛhya, nāma ityuktaḥ, nāmmāsi-ityuktaḥ, siṃhavāhinī, āptoryāmānām etc. Besides, there are a large number of grammatical irregularities and these suggest a period when the canons of the grammatical treatise were still in the making. This points to another circumstance that the Purāṇa was not very much tampered with.

[1] *Vāyu*, ch. 87, 34 and *Yāj*. III, 113.

[2] III, 194, 15.

8. The reference to Vyākaraṇa, Bhāṣya, and Dharmaśāstra in a single line does not help us much in our enquiry. That and the succeeding stanzas of the Purāṇa are an interpolation. This is a copy of the more elaborate rules laid down in the *Mahābhārata*. The omission of these portions does not affect the sense nor the continuity of the Purāṇa in the least.

9. There is no reference in this Purāṇa to the *Tantric* system of worship which consists of Devī being regarded as Śakti. Though we do not know for certain when this particular form of worship came into being we know this for certain that it was not popularly prevalent in the age when the *Vāyu Purāṇa* was composed.[1]

10. According to its own version in the later chapters dealing with royal dynasties the scene of the Purāṇa is laid in the reign of the Paurava King Adhisīmakṛṣna[2] who is supposed to have lived before the commencement of the Kali age. His contemporaries are Senajit of Magadha and Dīvākara of the Aikṣvāka dynasty.[3] According to Prof. Rapson the genealogy assigned to him indicates a more definite date; for 'of his immediate forbears Aśvamedhadatta, Śatānīka, Janamejaya, Parīkṣit all but the first, his father Aśvamedhadatta, are no doubt to be identified with kings of the same names who appear in the *Brāhmaṇas*.'[4] Therefore we have to look for a date prior to 1110 B. C. for Adhisīmakṛṣṇa. Not only is this king mentioned but also his contemporaries by the significant term *sāṃpratam* in these places under reference. From this we cannot imagine that the Purāṇa was composed as early as 1100 B. C. First, the historicity of these personages must be proved on more substantial evidence. Secondly, some of the Vedic compositions which the Purāṇa cites are much later and consequently the Purāṇa must be later. It may be that a particular teacher narrated the ancient Purāṇa when Adhisīmakṛṣṇa was ruling. The same version was continued in much later times when it was reduced to writing. In other words, the old materials handed down by oral tradition were allowed to exist as they were.

[1] For an outline of the history of the *Tantras*, see Farquhar *Religious Literature of India*, p. 199 ff.
[2] Ch. 99, 258–9 and 270.
[3] See *C. H. I.* Vol. I., p. 302; Pradhan, *Chronology of Ancient India*, p. 254, Pargiter, *Ancient Historical Tradition*, p. 182.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. I.

11. The portions dealing with dynasties of the Kali Age take us to the reign of Candragupta I of the Gupta dynasty and give an elaborate description of the period 320–330 A.D. It also gives the names of contemporary monarchs. The reference to the Huns who invaded India in the fifth century A. D., shows that the last revision of the Purāṇa ended somewhere about 500 A.D. At the least the lower limit cannot be later than 625 A.D., when Bāṇa in his historical romance, the *Harṣa Carita*, definitely stated that he attended a *Vāyu Purāṇa* reading in his village by a *pustakavācaka*, Sudṛṣṭi by name. [Gītya Pavamāna proktam Purāṇam papāṭa.]

If the Purāṇa has become so popular then we have to conclude that it attained celebrity in a much earlier period.

12. According to the astronomical data the Purāṇa may be placed at a period between B. C. 204 and A.D. 44.[1]

The foregoing results may be summarised. Inasmuch as there are almost *verbatim* quotations from the *Upaniṣads* the upper chronological limit will be somewhere about the 5th century B. C., the period immediately succeeding the epoch of the early *Upaniṣads*. Also the lower limit can be fixed about 600 A.D., as the *Harṣa Carita* knows it fairly full. From this we have to infer that the Purāṇa compilation extended over a number of centuries. Most of the portions were reduced to writing about the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ, and other portions were added now and then until it reached its present form somewhere between 350 and 500 A.D.

SECTION XII

General Remarks and Conclusion

A study of the Purāṇa and a survey of its contents lead us on to the conclusion, to advert to what has already been said, that this Purāṇa can be recognised as one of the earliest of the existing Purāṇas. The merits of the Purāṇa to warrant this conclusion are a cosmopolitan view of religion and philosophy, few portions of which can be definitely marked sectarian, a detailed description of cosmogonical parts, fewer legends and more facts. The remarks of Prof. Wilson are here apposite: 'There is altogether a copiousness and consistency of system which is not common in the Purāṇas. One feels an air of originality and antiquity about it, not perceptible in others.'

[1] See above sec. ix.

Reference has already been made as to the typical prologue furnished by this Purāṇa as also on the valuable astronomical data. Mention was also made of the theology of the Purāṇa more agreeing with the school of the Vedānta, but not failing to omit the principles and practice of the Yoga school, thus pointing out to the revival of the Yoga period represented by the Yatis of the Pre-Rig-Vedic and early Rig-Vedic period. The Purāṇa soars high in the realm of an extreme form of the *advaita* where the Supreme Being is treated as *Nirguṇa* or void of attributes.[1]

As was pointed out, the Purāṇa does not sacrifice Karma at the altar of Yoga. It makes us understand that Karma is the ladder to attain the top flat of Yoga. Then one can understand why the Purāṇa lays so much stress on the *śrāddhas* and frequentings of sacred *tīrthas* or places of pilgrimage. The rituals laid down are in the manner of the followers of the various schools of the Rig Veda, especially the Āśvalāyana section. The several chapters then on the *srāddhakalpa*, (in all twelve), with elaborate details as to their technique and form, indicate that the compiler of the section was a Rig Vedin. It may be remembered that even today we maintain this distinction of the three Vedas. Either one is a Rig Vedin, Yajur Vedin or a Sāma Vedin though a *dvija* is expected to study all the three Vedas.

In the same way the chapters on places of pilgrimage are not without interest. They tell us of the geography of the land—the names of cities, hills and rivers, lakes, temples, caves, then existing or known to exist. For example the following names among others occur. Rivers: Tāmraparṇi, Kāveri, Amarāvati, Ganges, Sindhu. Towns: Gokarṇa, Prabhāsa, Kurukṣetra, Prayāga, Kalañjara, Vāraṇasi and Gayā—(Ch. 77). To pass on, the relevant portions dealing with the historical period of Indian history as noticed in the preceding pages, are too valuable to be ignored. An attempt has been made to compare the different lists and to reconstruct a continuous history of the different dynasties, major and minor, and it must be said to the credit of Pargiter that it has proved fruitful.[2]

No doubt the lists contain a mere catalogue of names with the respective lengths of each member of one dynasty after the other. There are indeed very few details with particular reference to the events of each period, which is indeed a regrettable defect. Fortunately for us, independent sources such as the Buddhist books, the *Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra* and other literary sources, the inscriptions of Aśoka, Puṣyamitra and others corroborate the account contained in

[1] Ch. 20-31.
[2] See for lists The *Dynasties of the Kali Age*.

the Purāṇa, and credit the latter with genuineness and reliability. It sets forth a fairly good description of the Gupta rule at the commencement. The power of the Andhras has declined. Foreign dynasties of Śakas and other tribes have established kingdoms. No outstanding personality is on the scene. A century of dark period sets in. The good people resort to hills and caves to find safe and secure abodes. A number of kings set up independent states and encroached on their neighbour's territory.[1]

Though it can be said without any fear of contradiction that much of the material contained in the Purāṇa is original and deserves our careful scrutiny, still we must proceed in this examination of the materials with caution and discrimination and in a purely scientific spirit. If we attack the various topics recurring in the Purāṇa with a historical and scientific eye then we can be sure of fair and fairer results. Among others the etymological interpretation of various proper names such as Vyāsa,[2] Sūta,[3] Rudra,[4] is important but is unfortunately interspersed with fiction. The etymological interpretation is specially mentioned here as it throws a flood of light on the names which are otherwise mystic, mysterious and inexplicable. Of these we shall take for examination here Vyāsa, and conclude this essay.

Orthodox tradition has attributed all along to the same Vyāsa the division of the Vedas and the compilation of Itihāsas and all Purāṇas, perhaps including the very late Upapurāṇas. The etymology of the term means arranger or compiler, meaning thereby a general editor for various works. The works were there in a disorderly and ill-assorted fashion, and it was given to the wisest of the individuals to arrange them in proper form. Whoever arranged such mutilated texts and recovered them from oblivion went by the title of Vyāsa so far that particular work was concerned. But latter tradition knew well of one prominent figure Vyāsa, the son of Parāśara, and, by sheer confusion, attributed all the different Vyāsas' works to one Vyāsa. That a number of Vyāsas were even then distinguished and recognized, and that the term is only a generic title, are evident from the Purāṇa itself. In chapter (23) *Māheśvarāvatāra yoga*, twenty-eight *yugas* are distinguished from Vaivasvata Manu to Kṛṣṇa, and for every *yuga* there was a Vyāsa who went by the different names such as Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Parāśara, etc. The Vyāsa of the twenty-eighth yuga is said to be Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana, the son of Parāśara.[5] Thus there was a group or a class of Vyāsas who bore various titles in various *yugas*, and who perhaps were

[1] Ch. 99, 383 ff. [2] 77-75. [3] I, 28.
[4] 9, 80. [5] *Ibid.*, 205.

responsible in their own way to editing and collating corrupted texts of the sacred books. Thus the Purāṇa contains many such valuable information, which if tackled in the right spirit, will shed much light on otherwise inexplicable problems and factors in the history of Ancient India. From the historical point of view this Purāṇa, as others, can remove the chronological difficulties of the history of Northern India during some centuries preceding and following the Christian era. The more do we exploit them, the more are we introduced to the culture and civilisation of Ancient India.